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You have our full permission to digitize all issues of *The Mennonite* and make them available for free, with full-text access.

Best wishes in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

Anna Groff

Interim Editor
The Mennonite

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 01
JANUARY 11, 1994

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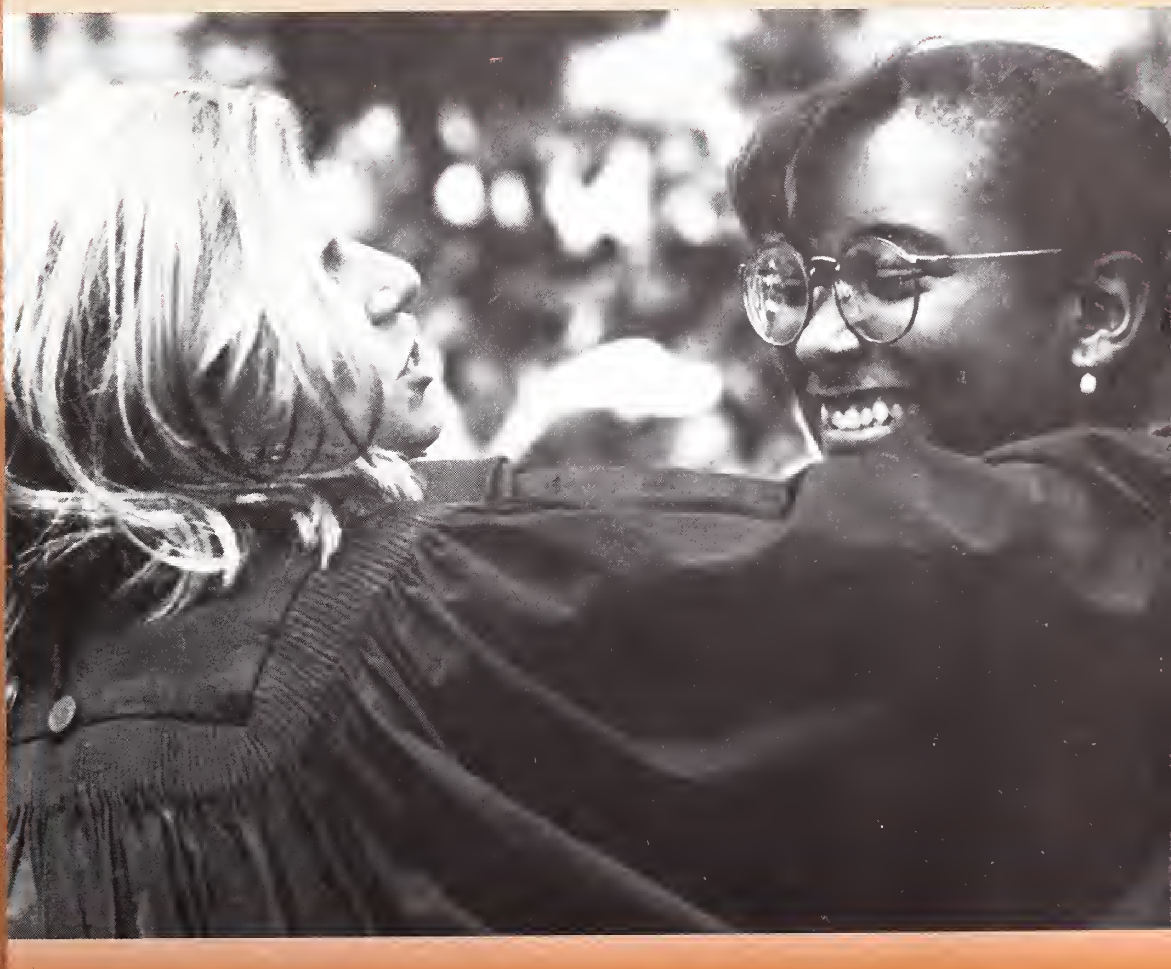
BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS OF RACISM

- Through the quagmire of race (see page 3)
- 'Say hello and smile' (see page 6)



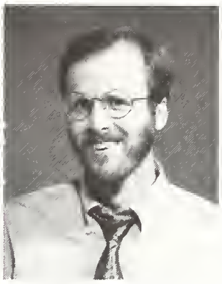
Prologue

Even though Christ "has broken down the dividing wall … the hostility between us" (Ephesians 2:14), racial barriers remain. The church has failed to address the destructive force of racism in our society.

In this issue, which is dated just six days before the celebration in the United States of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, we offer one way of tackling racism—teaching our youth. Jody Miller Shearer has put together a curriculum for junior high youth called *Challenging Racism*, which is published by Faith & Life Press. Read about Jody (page 3), then look through the exercises he has written (pages 4-5). Your congregation will want to get this curriculum and use it.

Read a mother's advice on a simple way to address the racism directed toward young African-American men (page 6). She offers sage but commonsense wisdom: "Say hello and smile."

How do you treat people who proclaim their racist beliefs in the name of Christ? See "When a Racist Cult Moved to Town" (page 7).



We are still welcoming your "ideas that churches can try." Send your ideas to us at Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

The 1993 index is available for free to anyone who requests one. *gh*

Next issue: The fight against AIDS

Cover: Photo by Jean-Claude Lejeune

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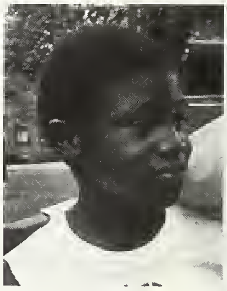

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THROUGH THE QUAGMIRE OF RACE

Jody Miller Shearer wants to help white people see with African-American eyes.

Carla Reimer

Jody Miller Shearer, Akron, Pa., makes no bones about the reason he decided to write a resource for junior highs on racism: "I want to help white people see with African-American eyes."

Challenging Racism, which was published by Faith & Life Press last September as part of its Fast Lane Bible Studies series, pushes junior highs to be aware of discrimination and to work at changing the systems that oppress people of color.

"I think we have tended to underestimate what junior high kids can actually do in terms of reconciliation," says Jody. "Often they are in more ethnically diverse situations than their parents. If they understand the causes of racism now, they are more likely to be equipped to deal with racism when they are older."

As a white male and staff associate for racism awareness for Mennonite Central Committee U.S., Jody has had plenty of exposure to the issues surrounding race. "One of the fundamental problems with racism is that so often we [whites] jump in to defend ourselves," he says. "I'm not interested in lambasting individual behavior; I want to explore the larger question of why we so often relate in a racist manner. That's one of the reasons I work in racism education. Through education, I can help equip people with the skills they need to deal with racial differences. Whites need to take responsibility for racism education. We are accountable for our interaction with people of color."

Jody learned some hard lessons about his own racism when he worked with MCC in New Orleans. "I was living and working with homeless men and ex-offenders in a newly started program. My boss was African-American," he says. "Everything started out fine. Politically speaking, we thought along the same lines. We had the same friends. We even dressed alike—in jeans and a T-shirt.

"But things eventually started falling apart, primarily because I had a difficult time accepting him as having more power than I did. We both ended up going to different assignments.

"This experience made me realize that for whites to work in relationships of mutuality with people of color we have to understand the fundamental power that is attributed to us as white people."

Fortunately Jody and his African-American boss had the opportunity to work through their conflict a year later when they met at a seminar. "It gave me hope that we can find our way through the quagmire of race," he says. "Unless we are deliberate about our relationships with people of color, they will tend to go the route of the status quo."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"Unless we are deliberate about our relationships with people of color, they will tend to go the route of the status quo."

Jody Miller Shearer

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BREAK DOWN BARRIERS

Jody Miller Shearer

Helps from a new book that teaches junior high youth how to challenge racism

EXPLORATION

SING OUT AGAINST APARTHEID

We haven't acknowledged how much we have bought into a power structure that is racist.

CPT

Option 1: Before class begins, move tables and chairs to block the path students normally use to come to your meeting place. The obstacles should be significant enough that the students will have to crawl over or under or break through (tape?) to get to the meeting place. Other possibilities including locking or jamming the door. Be creative. On each obstacle tape a "barrier" rectangle. As students arrive, welcome them with a hug, handshake, a hearty word of welcome or a special snack.

Collect the barrier rectangles from the obstacles. Have the students write down the barriers of race they have observed. Build a wall of barriers by taping the rectangles on the wall or other standing surface. Invite observations of how this barrier is seen every day. Possible barriers for people of color in church and school include

- racist jokes,
- pictures of a white Jesus,
- no worship style options except that of your denomination's dominant culture,
- people of color not being asked to exercise gifts of leadership,
- lack of encouragement to excel in the classroom,
- being seen only as a skin color and not as an individual ("you and your people"),
- being seen only as an individual without being connected to a culture ("you're just like everyone else"),
- not being greeted warmly,
- having to sing songs that equate whiteness with goodness and purity,
- not seeing pictures of all peoples in Sunday school materials.

Option 2: Tape several large pieces of newsprint together or bring an old bed sheet to the class. Put this makeshift barrier between two students (or between two groups of students if the barrier is large enough). Put a plate of cookies (or other tempting snack food) on one side of the barrier. Ask one student (or one group) to describe the plate of cookies (or other snack item) in front of him or her to the student (or group) on the other side of the barrier. Encourage those describing the food to be as descriptive as possible. Allow taunts or teases to develop for a little while. Ask the groups to figure out a way to share the cookies with everyone on both sides of the barrier. The only problem is that they can't go over, under or around the barrier (and the barrier extends in imaginary lines to the full extent of the room). Hint: Allow them to tear down the barrier. Eat the cookies (or other snack item) together.

4 WAYS FOR WHITES TO AVOID RACISM

1. Be aware of white privilege. People of color are often absent from positions of power in society and the church.

2. Don't think that everything has to be done your way. There are different styles for dealing with conflict and other situations.

3. Understand the historical context underlying race relations. The present reality can't be disassociated from the past reality.

4. The church needs to embrace a more authentic theology; the Scriptures call us to reconciliation. We haven't acknowledged how much we have bought into a power structure that inhibits the growth of our sisters and brothers of color.

Through education we equip our children with the skills they need to deal with racial differences.

CLEO Photography

APPLICATION

Scavenger hunt option: Pass out "A Difference Scavenger Hunt" to the students and ask them to fill it out. What barriers are in place for people of color?

A DIFFERENCE SCAVENGER HUNT

List differences you see in people in your church, school and community in a column marked "The Difference." List how people are treated as a result of those differences in a column marked "The Treatment."

For example, people of color talk about being excluded from informal social and church activities or being passed over for important speaking engagements.

Other differences to look for: accent, male or female, rich or poor. See how many differences you can find, but pay special attention to differences based on skin color.

THE DIFFERENCE	THE TREATMENT

Mall trip option: Ask the students to fill out "A Mall Trip." As in Option 1, build a wall of barriers based on the students' responses.

Possible barriers for people of color in a mall or commercial setting:

- harassment by the security personnel for "inappropriate behavior" (laughing or talking "too loud"),
- unavailability of personal care items,
- no one knows how to cut your hair,
- difficulty of finding jobs in other than janitorial or maintenance work,
- few nonstereotypical depictions of people of color in advertisements.

A MALL TRIP

Imagine that you are going to a nearby mall or shopping center. What are some of the barriers that people of color encounter there? If you are a European-American, try to put yourself in the place of a person of color. If you are a person of color, write down barriers you have experienced.

Here are a few questions to get you started:

- What skin colors and/or facial characteristics do the clothes mannequins have?
- What kinds of food are sold?
- What kind of people are depicted in advertisements in the stores?
- What color are the Band-Aids?
- Who holds the store manager positions? the sales jobs? the janitorial jobs?

These exercises are adapted with permission from *Challenging Racism* by Jody Miller Shearer (Faith & Life Press, $9.95 U.S. / $12.95 Canadian). To order call Faith & Life Press at 1-800-743-2484, or in Canada (204) 888-6781.

RACISM RESOURCES

Gordon Allport lists three possible sources of prejudice in his book *The Nature of Prejudice* (Addison Wesley, 1966). Although written over a quarter century ago, the dynamics of prejudice have not changed. The three sources he lists are unfavorable economic circumstance, family influence and exclusionist attitudes. In particular, you may want to spend time talking with your students about the influence of family in developing prejudices.

For more information on prejudice, see the following:

- *Parenting for Peace and Justice* by Kathleen and James McGinnis (Orbis, 1981)
- *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children* by Louise Derman-Sparks and the ABC Task Force (National Association for Education of Young Children, 1981)
- *Face-to-Face: Seeking Racial Reconciliation*, a video resource (InterVarsity, 1990)

'SAY HELLO AND SMILE'

The practice of offering smiles and greetings to young men builds relationships in a Chicago neighborhood.

Dihya Al Kahina

The gospel was from the book of Matthew that Sunday. The homily was about loving one another, our neighbors and our enemies, and members of the congregation were invited to share their thoughts.

"I find it hard to love my neighbors because of racism," my usually quiet son blurted out. The emotion in his words surprised me.

I thought about what he said happens when he walks down the street: White women clutch their purses or cross the street. When I send him to the store, he hates to go because the store personnel watch him. They think he wants to steal something.

It may be easier for some people to love one another, but being a black male, he is not privileged to experience even mutual respect. It was apparent to me how racism keeps us from loving—and how necessary it is for us to keep fighting it.

After Mass, I talked to several others who were teachers. They said that their students had the same kind of experiences.

"What can we do?" they asked. I told them one thing they could do was to tell their friends and neighbors to start smiling at these young men when they see them walking down the street. "Say hello to them and smile," I said. I told my son that he and his friends could do the same.

It works. Women who have tried it say they feel much better now. The youth were surprised, but they began to say, "Hello. How are you?" and smiled back. It has helped build relationships in the neighborhood. Believe me, if you are on speaking terms with the youth in your community, they sort of feel protective of you.

Dihya Al Kahina is administrative coordinator for the National Assembly of Religious Women, based in Chicago. Reprinted from Salt *(Nov./Dec. 1993).*

Dale D. Gehman

It may be easier for some people to love one another, but being a black male, [my son] is not privileged to experience even mutual respect.

WHEN A RACIST CULT MOVED TO TOWN

What should Christians do when a group preaches racist beliefs in the name of Christ?

Name withheld by request

We joked about a cult group moving into Our Village.* Rumor had it they believed Jesus Christ would touch down at Our Village when he returned to earth. The old house we had bought as our retirement home would give us a front-row seat. Three years later, as permanent residents of Our Village, we were no longer joking.

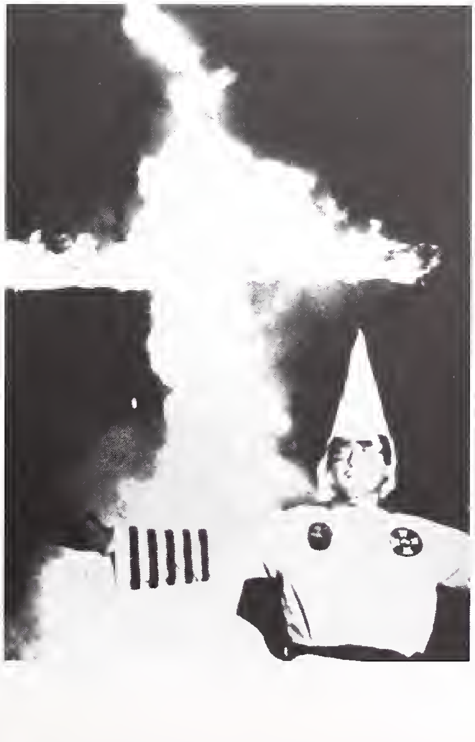
They called themselves The Church of Jesus Christ. Their literature associated them with the group known in the United States as Identity. Racist, militaristic, anti-Jewish, they were under surveillance by the state police, the county sheriff and the FBI.

How did this affect a community of less than 300 people? How did we respond? On an individual level we tried to be friendly. Driving home one day from the nearest shopping center we picked up a hitchhiker. She was one of the two "wives" of the cult "minister," Gavin Smart. (The group disdains legal marriages.) She insisted on helping us carry in our grocery bags. We related as friends.

Some residents shunned them. Families refused to let Smart's 5-year-old son play with their children. I pitied the lonely child, but I respected their decision. If we had had children I would have wanted to protect them.

Martha, a teenage neighbor, started dating a cult man. If I had known then what I know now, I would have risked warning her about involvement. The most we did was to invite them for several visits. He brought propaganda and tried to draw us into debate. He claimed to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and his Savior. But quickly he moved to a creation story that supported white supremacy established by force. Martha bore him a child and moved in as his "wife."

Nick, recently retired, was a challenge to us. A nationally recognized "minister," he was older than anyone in the local group. At the post office one day he asked my husband about a Bible study we had begun in our home. Was it just for our church? My husband explained that people attended from the local Methodist church and nearby Wesleyan and Mennonite churches. Nick came. His presence caused tension. As Nick criticized and argued, people grew reluctant to share. One evening he ranted against someone for reading from the Living Bible. We called a halt to the heated exchange. We explained to Nick that this violated the purpose of our group. My husband and I offered to meet with him and hear his arguments.



RNS

Nick came loaded with reference books. He quoted Bible verses to prove that Jesus was non-Jewish, that all nonwhites are beasts, that alliance with Jesus demanded that we be armed to fight a takeover by non-whites. We sensed God leading us as we answered in love, with scriptural proof to contradict his claims.

A cross burning aroused some citizens to look for a course of action against the cultists. It happened at a retreat about 25 miles away on the property of a cult member. The county newspaper carried an article about Ku Klux Klan in our area. Since our county economy depended heavily on tourism, business people headed up a citizens' group calling itself Village Protectors. The gas station owner, for instance, told how he was questioned about the KKK by a African-American family driving a large motor home. They drove on rather than park at our nearby campground.

**The account is true. Names of people and places are fictitious to protect the community.*

Firebomb: Some villagers viewed themselves as Protectors but remained underground. The tavern owner said that several in the bar were boasting that they had equipment in their car to firebomb the apartment building where most cult members lived.

The county ministerial association was invited to one Protector meeting. They talked for three hours. Several pastors agreed to announce in their churches that this cult group is not Christian. Our Village's pastor chose to remain detached, fearing he would be vulnerable to retaliation.

Politically most citizens of Our Village registered apathy. Election ballots often had empty spots because no one sought office. That year saw a feeble awakening. The apartment buildings housing most of the cult members were owned by a veteran council member. Some citizens blamed him for the cult's presence and tried to crowd him out of the village council. They entered primaries and succeeded. The political activity was both shortsighted and misdirected. We allowed final ballots to appear with no nominees for two minor offices. On election day there were seven write-in votes for each open slot, and two cult affiliates were elected by unanimous write-in.

One morning before elections an effigy dangled from a lamp post in the middle of Our Village. Dressed in a Nazi uniform, it was a carefully crafted likeness of Gavin Smart. Several days later on a nearby property owned by a cult member there was planted an eight-foot wooden Star of David with an igniting device. A rain shower apparently short-circuited it. Then the village was littered with papers warning, "Gavin Smart, get out of town." A week later the apartment house owner found a threatening note pinned to his door. It was suspected that all these were the work of an anti-cultist group, also militant, coming in from a distance to harass the Identity group. We felt trapped in the middle and afraid.

He claimed to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and his Savior. But quickly he moved to a creation story that supported white supremacy established by force.

The apartment house owner came to talk with us. He felt unjustly blamed and rejected. He asked, "What would you do if the law said that you could not evict these people or refuse to rent to them on the basis of religion?" We said, "We might choose then not to own any apartment houses." But I don't think he heard us.

The county sheriff chaired a meeting arranged between the cult group and the Village Protectors. He threatened that at the first evidence of disorder he would dismiss the meeting and arrest any who protested.

Gavin Smart dominated the meeting. It appeared that none of his group spoke without his permission. He read a lengthy position paper loaded with Bible verses pulled out of context. To debate his arguments would have been fruitless. My husband asked questions that led him to explain their beliefs beyond his prepared statement and exposed blatant heresies. A county pastor who was present said nothing.

Smart promised that to help reduce tension they would henceforth be politically inactive. But two weeks later they claimed the two empty spots on the ballot. He also promised they would no longer spread their writings throughout the community. But a week after election there appeared on the post office wall a one-sheet newspaper entitled *Our Village Visitor*. Unsigned, it gloated over the write-in election, and there was no doubt as to its source.

Rash action: My husband was an early morning walker. As he walked through the streets of Our Village he prayed for the residents of each house he passed. That included the cult members. I believe his participation in the Protector meetings when invited helped preserve balance and deter rash action that could lead to violence. Socially we maintained relationships with individuals as long as possible without violating Christian principles. Spiritually we insisted upon an informed, holistic approach to Bible study.

After the appearance of *Our Village Visitor*, the Protectors decided again to publish something. They agreed that information must be factual and all articles signed. They asked us to write "something religious."

What we submitted was this:

> *"Christianity or Counterfeit?* An area of the country was flooded with counterfeit $20 bills. Federal agents invited bankers and businesspeople to a meeting to help them spot the counterfeits. The meeting was devoted to examining a genuine $20 bill. When they left the meeting they knew the marks of the genuine so well that they were able to spot the counterfeits.
>
> "We followers of Jesus Christ need the same concentration on the genuine if we want to be able to spot the counterfeit. Let us saturate ourselves with who Jesus is, what he taught, what he did. For a starter, let us read the four accounts of the life of Jesus Christ as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. To know him is our salvation, our wholeness, our refuge."

Update: Gavin Smart punched the landlord and subsequently had to leave the apartment building. One by one all the other followers have left Our Village and moved to other locations.

Letters

The importance of death

In seeing the editorial "The Death Fallacy" (Oct. 26 issue) I was immediately drawn to this because it has some bearing on the medical work we are in. I thought, "Na Brudder Gordon," will you join the medical world in its emphasis on the importance of death?

We have a lady in her 80s who has a hidden medical problem. She is ready for the Lord to take her. Doctors insist on exams and expensive treatments, all a torment to the lady, and, of course, death follows. Records tell us we spend a great percentage of our medical expenses on people over 65 years of age.

When I read where Daniel Callahan is criticized on the idea of death as "correctable with enough money," and more and more the rest of your editorial, I made up my mind that I want to congratulate you for the right direction for such an important and timely subject.

The Mennonite means much to us. Muriel Thiessen Stackley's article (Oct. 26 issue, page 5) was so warming, reminding me of the way Richard Schmidt from the Alexanderwohl Church (Goessel, Kan.) handled his wife's funeral.

Being so far away from home, the "Letters" page gives us an idea how living and thinking go on at home. *Clara and John Schmidt, Asunción, Paraguay*

Finding God in prison

I'm a 25-year-old, non-using drug addict in prison, and I have learned in the last three years to love Jesus on my own.

For some reason I was directed to the address of the General Conference Mennonite Church. I wrote and asked for information. When I read it, I had a profound sense of peace. I agreed with everything it said.

Being in prison, I find it hard to live a godly life. Evil runs this place. I try not to judge people, but I feel I'm totally out of my element.

Many of the articles I read [from *The Mennonite*] moved my feelings in ways I didn't know were possible. Many different pastors visit the prison and witness, but none of them is Mennonite. I am allowed to have a pastor visit me, and I am allowed mail. I have many questions I would like answered, and I have much to say to anyone who is suffering from an addiction. I would like to communicate with someone on a regular basis. That would help me in my search for more understanding of Jesus.

I want people to understand that even some of the most evil people can be turned around to believe in God, Jesus and the Holy Ghost. In some people's eyes I am an evil person worthy of nothing but prison or death. I accept this with a sense of freedom because I know now that Jesus is part of my soul, and I will love him with all my being for all eternity, in spite of how others judge me. I hope to be an active part of the General Conference Mennonite Church one day. *Wayne Woltman, #206877, D.D.D.M.S.U., Box 220, Hominy, OK 74035-0220*

Abuse in Mennonite families

After reading the Nov. 23 issue (page 16) I wanted to let you know how pleased I am that the Mennonite church is beginning to address the problem of abuse in all its forms among Mennonite families. I think for too long many have felt this doesn't exist or, if it exists in Mennonite families, there are only a few isolated cases. I believe the problem does exist in far greater numbers than we are willing to believe.

I grew up in a Mennonite home, as did my husband of more than 20 years, and I recently left him because of the continuing and escalating verbal and psychological abuse. It was undoubtedly the most difficult decision I've ever made, but I believe the Lord was and has been guiding me each step of the way.

I agree with Carolyn Holderread Heggen's statement that "healing from abuse is a spiritual battle and that 'there are institutional powers of darkness at work here and we must confront the systemic evils built into our very structures.'" The longer I stayed in our marriage, the more aware I became of the evil that was in control regarding my husband's behavior.

I've also come to realize how difficult it is for families to admit to this problem. My ex-husband's family still refuses to acknowledge that this abuse existed and exists. Because of their denial they are not dealing with it. It has been difficult and painful for me to realize they believe I am fabricating everything to discredit their son.

But in spite of the pain, the grief process (which every divorced couple goes through) and the loss of financial security and stability, I thank God every day for guiding me to a peace-filled environment.

I realize leaving is not a viable option for everyone in an abusive relationship, but I hope and pray that the symposium was the beginning of some real progress in addressing and dealing with this issue. I pray that God will continue to lead the Mennonite church as it strives to bring about healing for the abused as well as the abuser. *Name withheld by request*

Blaming singles

The precise reason that singles are alienated in the church as well as in society is that Western cultures value people for what they do, and not for who they are. This is all the more obvious when we come to believe that the alienated, the rejected and the oppressed among us will find a better life by "getting involved."

This basically blames singles for their condition, implying that they are the only ones who can change their position in the church, or society in general. But let's face the truth. Committees will not improve your life. Neither will potlucks, programs, workshops or retreats.

"The spiritual life is something that people worry about when they are so busy with something else they think they ought to be spiritual," writes the late Trappist monk and writer Thomas Merton in *Days of a Stranger*.

The real church, the real Spirit, the real love that sustains us has nothing to do with an institutional body or any status in regard to who or who doesn't love us. The real Spirit of life is found in life itself. It comes not through analysis or reasoning but by simply living. The real Spirit of life is love unaware of itself.

Singles are not a "missed opportunity." People who are unmarried are generally emotionally and physically overextended individuals who often have no or few friends; they grow frustrated and annoyed by religious institutions that define them by a ring on their finger and look for real Spirit outside the church. Singles are not just something the church is "missing" but people the church has downright lost. I know, because I am one of them. *Linell Roccaforte, Albuquerque, N.M.*

We need *The Mennonite*

Much discussion is ensuing in our church about checking with each household as to their interest in receiving *The Mennonite*. Some, as expected, aren't interested.

Yet will we withdraw a reminder of our wider conference's thoughts and actions entirely from member homes and their children's eyes and purview?

This seems errant.

Is there a possibility to monthly send one issue of *The Mennonite* into those currently "disinterested" homes?

Can we go back to congregations and ask them to financially support such an idea?

We might well temporarily lose a few of these members in a huff, but will most likely keep a desirable reminder of Mennonite actions beyond our local communities in the larger percentage of them. *Paul Selman, Elkhart, Ind.*

Mennonite training for pastors

It is important to encourage potential pastors to attend Mennonite seminaries. I am an ordained General Conference pastor who graduated from a Baptist seminary where Methodists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and others also attended. I have studied Anabaptist theology carefully, but I have not attended any classes at a Mennonite seminary.

In the past I have proposed that the General Conference Mennonite Church be like the Evangelical Lutheran Church and require that every GC pastor graduate from a conference-sponsored seminary. Perhaps this is not a realistic proposal.

A second proposal is for the GCMC and its area conferences to have uniform ordination requirements for pastors who have not attended a Mennonite seminary. Usually a pastor is licensed for two years before he or she is ordained. During this two-year period, the candidate should be required to complete a six-credit correspondence course through Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. This class could at least give a brief overview of Anabaptist history, theology and practice.

This is not an unreasonable expectation for new pastors to the conference, and perhaps it would help new pastors understand that the Anabaptist vision of Christianity is biblical and Christ-centered. *Dave Waldowski, Sioux Falls, S.D.*

Keep it up

I enjoy *The Mennonite*, especially as I am a Mennonite by heritage and faith but am not attending a Mennonite church. Keep up the good work. *Anita Harder, Brampton, Ont.*

From our mission workers

Colombia—I met Jesus this morning. He was dressed in extremely soiled clothes, his hair was stringy, clumped together with grease from months of going without a shower. He rang our doorbell at 8:30 this morning. He came wanting assistance. He needed some money to go to the hospital, to take care of his wounds. He was not wounded from nails through his hands and his feet but from a bullet. He showed me holes through his leg where the steel had entered and passed through. I talked with him for a short time through the three-inch by three-inch miniature door that is in the window of our larger front door. Remembering that we were told not to open the door for strangers, "for many will say they need help, then rob or harm you," we conversed through bars that separated us like sins separate us from God. I felt distant from him. I knew by now that this same Jesus often came to Ricardo and Patricia, the owners of the house we are staying in, and asked them for help. They gave help to him. It wasn't long until I felt the Spirit of God tell me to open the large door and go out and talk to this man. Once outside I felt free to shake his hand, to look into his eyes and experience the warmth of his smile. His name was Juan, and he was a poet, he said, and promptly he began to recite some beautiful poetry. The words flowed smoothly, and even though he spoke in a language foreign to mine, I understood what he was saying. He was communicating with me in a way that words cannot define. After he had finished his poem, he held out some change—300 pesos, he said—and told me that he needed a total of 1,000 for a hospital visit. I added 700 pesos to his total, and he was as happy as a person who has just won the lottery. My, what power I seemed to possess, just by giving him 90 cents. He told me what a beautiful person I was and assured me that he was a Christian also. As he was leaving, I gave him a small loaf of fresh bread and a banana.

It can at times be quite difficult to find Jesus in a big city. I often look for him through forms that are often distant. This morning I was blessed. I had a chance to meet him face to face. I have a strong desire to spend more time with him. I want to walk with him, and talk. How much he could teach me through his poems and his simple way of living. No doubt I would become more real. I needed absolutely no mask when I shared with him and he with me this morning. He was not impressed with the clothes I had on, nor would he have been impressed had he known the possessions I have. But I believe he connected with the Spirit of God within me.

I thank God for this experience today. Tomorrow I will look for God again in the faces of the people I meet, and I realize that God will be there, waiting to speak to me. I pray that I will be willing to listen. *Frank Soto-Albrecht*

Beijing, China—This fall I took a week-long trip to Henan Province with Todd Hanson, another China Educational Exchange person, to visit churches founded by Mennonite missionaries. In both cities we visited (Puyang and Daming) the churches had only just opened again, and we were able to observe the process firsthand. I felt moved by the lives of the Christians we met. These people are examples to us of the meaning of costly discipleship. *Todd Friesen*

Speaking out

Looking down the gun barrels

A visit to the Abbotsford International Airshow

Bruce Hiebert

The rows of military aircraft sit shimmering in the distance under the hot sun, heat waves blurring their shapes as they squat along the concrete. A massive B-1 bomber whines into life at one end of the runway while six huge interceptor fighters roar overhead. Loudspeakers crackle messages across the airfield while people and vehicles hurry about.

This isn't a NATO exercise. It's the Abbotsford (B.C.) International Airshow. Every year this little corner of Canada, usually known for its raspberries, comes face to face with the entertaining side of terror.

Make no mistake about it—it is entertaining. To watch those six fighters break and reform formation, sliding and weaving across the sky in patterns of increasing complexity, is to be blasted by the thrilling linkage of imagination and technology. My mind reels in astonishment as my eyes follow their flight paths. It is an awesome sight.

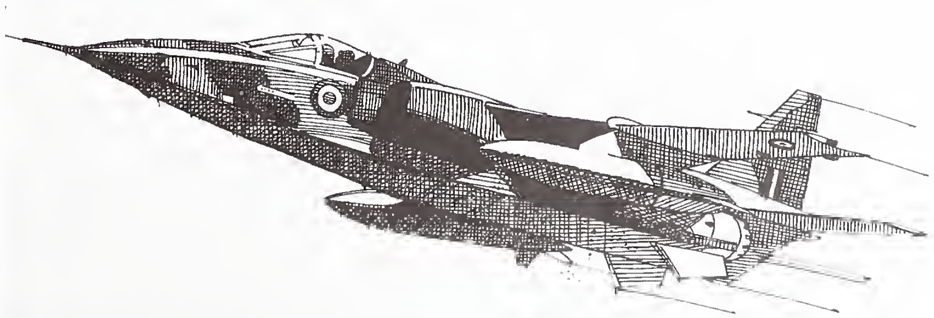
But what stops me cold is the realization that what I so peacefully watch is a sign of impending nightmare for many people on this planet. The weapons systems I walk serenely beneath send shock waves of terror through people in Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, Vietnam, Lebanon, Ethiopia, El Salvador, Iran ... the list goes on and on.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite.*

Although presented for enjoyment at the airshow, these aircraft were all designed as agents of death. With the exception of the helicopters and the big transports which also sit here, they are only good for delivering specified amounts of death to precisely calculated locations around the globe.

A group of people, mostly children, lines up to peer into the cockpit of a little brightly painted A4 Skyhawk. Just below the platform on which they cheerfully cluster, the dark barrel of a 20mm cannon protrudes. This aircraft won accolades during the Vietnam War for its efficiency. While these children clamber up to the jet, I have to wonder: How many other children had their limbs blown off by the bullets it fired or bombs it dropped? How many had their flesh pierced or were blinded, maimed and killed?

Nearby a B-52 intercontinental bomber droops gray and huge, sort of motherly when you look at it the right way. But no mother would do to her children what this machine was created to do. Its belly has dropped tons of bombs on villages and cities in a dozen conflicts around the globe.



Testimonies to our human ability to create and destroy

May Day: Is it the power that attracts us to these machines? They stand as awesome testimonies to our human ability to create and destroy. Or are they signs of national pride, much like the old Soviet May Day parades with their acres of weaponry?

A tidy gray Canadian CF-18 sits by itself, a small testimony to Canada's participation in the sport of "great" nations. I have heard it called a "peacekeeper." Peace can be purchased at the end of the gun, but for how long?

As I wander through this sickening array of destructive technology, I wonder above all what it says about us that we can drag into public this humiliating evidence of our violence. How is it we can show off so openly our capacity to kill?

Here in B.C.'s "Bible belt," a community known for high church attendance and "family values," a part of the land that claims obedience to the Prince of Peace, we find Canada's largest public offering to the prince of death.

This is a wicked irony. Here in B.C.'s "Bible belt," a community known for high church attendance and "family values," a part of the land that claims obedience to the Prince of Peace, we find Canada's largest public offering to the prince of death.

As I walk away, other questions come to mind: What are we saying to our children? What does our invitation to watch these weapons of war say to the next generation? Will my son, so active with his Lego bricks, find himself designing one of these? Will my daughter supervise their takeoffs and landings? And who will be their targets?

Despite the heat I shiver.

Bruce Hiebert serves with Mennonite Central Committee in British Columbia.

Fiscal health

Watch your quid pro quo

New rules for deductions began Jan. 1, 1994, for U.S. taxpayers

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Donors have long been comfortable using their cancelled check as a basis to claim a charitable tax deduction. As of Jan. 1, 1994, however, this is no longer good enough for certain contributions.

The U.S. Congress has changed its rules. U.S. taxpayers are now required to obtain and keep a written acknowledgement of any gift of $250 or more. The acknowledgment must outline and place a value on any goods or services provided to the taxpayer by the charity. (Canada has already had a similar law.) A charity has additional requirements with respect to a "quid pro quo" contribution of more than $75. A quid pro quo contribution is a payment "made partly as a contribution and partly in consideration for goods or services" provided to the donor by the charity. If a taxpayer buys goods or services from a charity, such as through a fund-raising activity, and the donor pays the charity $75 or more, the charity must tell the taxpayer the value of the purchased item and explain that only the amount over the item's value can be deducted as a contribution.

Here is one example: A person purchased a quilt for $500 at a fund raiser. The charity established that the quilt is worth $400. The receipt must list the purchase price of the quilt and that the value was $400, resulting in a charitable contribution of $100. Since many donors may not be aware of this new requirement, the donor may be in jeopardy of having a donation disallowed if proper receipts are not received from the charitable organization.

As in most cases, there are penalties for noncompliance. The new law imposes a penalty of $10 per contribution, to a maximum of $5,000 per fund-raising event or mailing, on charities that fail to make the required quid pro quo disclosures, unless the failure was due to reasonable cause. The penalties will apply if a charity either fails to make the required disclosure in connection with a quid pro quo contribution or makes a disclosure that is incomplete or inaccurate.

Private school tuition: There are good reasons for these new regulations. Over the years there has been abuse in which taxpayers have claimed charitable deductions in cases when goods and services were obtained. Examples include claiming charitable deductions for private school tuition or items purchased at benefit auctions. So much of this abuse has occurred that these tighter rules are expected to generate $500 million in additional tax revenue over the next five years.

As a donor, keep in mind that the information requirement as to the value of goods and services falls on the charity and is triggered only when something of value is given when a donation is made. The donor, however, is required to obtain a receipt for any cash gift of $250 or greater, regardless of whether or not the donor received something in return. The basic rule of thumb for cash gifts of $250 or more is, no receipt, no deduction.

Keep in mind that the $250 threshold refers to one-time gifts and is not cumulative. Making 10 cash gifts of $50 to the same organization over time does not require written substantiation, although many churches and charities may receipt all gifts individually just to be sure they are in compliance.

Remember that there are two rules to be concerned with. First, a receipt is needed for an individual cash contribution of $250 or greater where nothing is received in return. If no goods or services are received by the donor, the receipt must state this fact.

Second, there are two requirements for individual cash contributions of $75 or more that are part contribution and part payment for goods or services received. The charity must provide a written statement to the donor that

- specifies to the donor that the amount of the contribution that is tax-deductible is limited to the excess of the amount of cash contributed by the donor over the value of any goods or services provided in return,
- provides the donor with a good faith estimate of the value of the goods or services furnished to the donor.

Rules also exist for individual gifts of noncash property valued at $250 or more. When making gifts that fall within this category, you should be certain you are dealing with charities familiar with the rules and follow them closely to protect your charitable deduction.

> The donor is required to obtain a receipt for any cash gift of $250 or greater, regardless of whether or not the donor received something in return.

One final caution is that the receipt from the charity must be received by the donor on or before the earlier of the following two dates: the date the donor files a tax return claiming a deduction for the contribution, or the due date (including extensions) for filing the tax return.

The bottom line is that your cancelled check can no longer be viewed as substantiation for your charitable tax deduction for every gift made after Jan. 1, 1994. In many cases you will need a receipt from the church or charity to protect your deduction.

Central Americans find refuge in Vancouver church

Vancouver (GCMC)—"I didn't have any idea in my mind what Canada would be like. I wanted a better life," said Clara, who left Guatemala four years ago with her five children. (She and Delmey asked that their last names not be used.) She spent two years in different parts of the United States — Texas, Kansas, Georgia— before moving here in April 1991.

Gradually Clara told bits and pieces of her story. Bandits killed one of her sons when he was 14 years old. It is likely the bandits were employees of the Guatemalan government, she said.

"I was afraid for the rest of my children," said Clara. When someone chased her with a knife, she decided she needed to leave Guatemala City. Even the Ministry of Public Relations advised her to leave the city or the country.

Before Clara could do this, she needed to save the equivalent of about $900 for the trip. She worked for close to three years to raise the money. "Those were hard times," she recalled. "I worked from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. selling butter, milk and cheese. Then I came home and had to take care of my family."

Ten years ago Delmey and her five children traveled from El Salvador to Mexico in hopes of finding a more secure life. Instead they met with tragedy. As a result, they moved to Vancouver in August 1991. Delmey did not want to share any further details about her experiences in Mexico or El Salvador.

Family camp: Both women grew up in the Catholic church. Clara was sponsored in Canada by First United Spanish Mennonite Church and Mountainview Mennonite Church in Vancouver. Delmey was invited to attend a family camp sponsored by First United Spanish Mennonite Church; she consequently decided to participate in the congregation.

"The church has helped me in many ways," said Clara. "They found me a place to live and gave me furniture and dishes."

The congregation has also provided necessary emotional support in times of family crises. Delmey talked about how her children often don't want to follow the customs that were part of their life in El Salvador.

"In El Salvador my children would go to bed at night and get up in the morning. We would eat together as a family. They would help out in the home," she said. "Now they want to be always out on the street."

"I told them, 'See the front door. The inside of our house is El Salvador. The outside is Canada. If you don't believe that, you can go outside,'" said Delmey.

"I told the children, 'The inside of our house is El Salvador. The outside is Canada.'"

Delmey

continued on next page

Carla Reimer

Taken in: *Clara and Delmey*

Inside the news

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In the last three decades, infant mortality around the world has dropped by almost one-half. Even in the poorest nations, the average life span has lengthened by 12 years or more. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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In the fall of 1993, Mennonites in Wichita, Kan., began gathering at sites of violence in the city. Groups of two to six people meet at the sidewalk of places where violent killings have occurred to pray and to leave a lighted candle, a flower and a card explaining their wish for peace in their city. Mennonite Church of the Servant pastor Nick King says, "It's an empowering feeling to pray. It feels at times like there is nothing we can do about the violence. Praying gives us hope and a sense of what God can do."

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The city of Chicago has renamed the street that runs in front of First Mennonite Church in Chicago "Reverend John H. Burke Drive" in honor of the church's pastor. The three blocks of 73rd Street between Ashland Street and Loomis Street received new street signs on Friday, Dec. 17, 1993, and the church held a dedication service that Sunday. The city council of Chicago voted for the change after reviewing Burke's history and the contributions of the church to its community. Burke has pastored the church since 1972.

The world's nuclear stockpiles, after all existing commitments for reduction have been met, will still hold more than 900 times the explosive power expended in World War II. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Times change. Franz Jagerstatter, an Austrian Roman Catholic executed during World War II for conscientious objection, is featured on an Austrian postage stamp with the phrase: "He followed his conscience." (*Newton Area Peace Center newsletter*)

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Twenty-five women from the Church of the Brethren announced at an ecumenical conference in November that they will no longer use the denomination's name, which they consider sexist. The announcement came at the "Re-imaging: Churches in Solidarity with Women" conference, which featured presentations on feminist theologies and worship emphasizing female imagery for God. Church of the Brethren spokesperson Eric Bishop said, "A committee was appointed to study whether a committee should be appointed to study" a change in the denomination's name. (*Christianity Today*)

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The Central District ministerial committee issued a statement on Nov. 30, 1993, encouraging all churches to affirm the gifts of the pastoral ministry without regard to gender or racial differences. "A plateau seems to have been reached in our churches where women are accepted for ministry in associate roles. ... More difficult has been the matter of finding churches that will accept a woman as senior pastor. ... Women and men who apply for pastoral positions should be judged on their call and gifts, and if a woman and man seem to be more or less evenly matched for the job, no gender preference should be given to either of them," the statement says.

In particular, one of her sons didn't want to help out around the home. Delmey asked him if he wanted to live on the street. He ran away for four days. When he came home, she called the pastor.

"The pastor told my son that God didn't like what he had done. My son listened to the pastor and the problem was solved," she said. "The church has helped teach my children values."

Both mothers said that despite the problems they encounter, they are happy with their decision to move to Canada. "I feel secure. I am happy that my children are going forward and getting an education," said Delmey.

They are also thankful for the support they receive from the First United Spanish Mennonite Church. "At the church, it doesn't matter what nationality we are because we are all God's children," said Clara.

"I would like to learn more so that I can evangelize others. There are lots of lost people who need to hear God's message," said Delmey. *Carla Reimer*

Pastor to refugees faces challenges

Vancouver (GCMC)—As a half-time pastor at First United Spanish Mennonite Church here, Arthur Bergen believes his congregation faces similar struggles to those encountered by New Testament churches.

He became the pastor here two years ago; he also is a student at Regent College in Vancouver, where he is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree.

"We don't have the money, politics, power and structures that other churches have. In this way we are marginalized like the early church," he said, noting that about 80 percent of the members came as refugees, mostly from Central America.

This congregation, which has an average attendance of 35 people, meets in the building of the First United Mennonite Church. "Our members have so many struggles," said Bergen. "Many of them fled difficult situations in their home countries."

"Many are unstable from an emotional and economic viewpoint. They have a basic lack of trust," he said.

Carla Reimer

Marginalized: *Arthur Bergen, with his wife, Angelika, and son Alexis.*

Bergen added that the members often bring their past conflicts into the church setting: "I see a lot of tension that is the result of their personal backgrounds. Sometimes the tensions are intensified because we have people who are from a left-wing philosophy and those who support a right-wing philosophy."

"For the past 18 months I have tried not to emphasize their differences. I have encouraged them to find a new identity in Christ," he said.

They also bring a rigid view of leadership. "Most of us have grown up in a totalitarian setting. We learned that we don't question our religious or political leaders," said Bergen, who spent his childhood to his early 30s in Paraguay.

As a result, he said, "People expect the pastor to know everything. ... to be responsible for all the decisions. ... It seems that the totalitarian style, not the biblical model, is most successful in terms of church growth."

"Deep in my heart, I know I want to follow the Anabaptist faith, which includes the priesthood of all believers," he said. "But it is a constant struggle because even if I want to encourage the members to think for themselves, they don't want to take responsibility for church decisions."

The church also struggles with issues related to acculturation. "The parents often don't speak much, if any, English. Their kids adapt quickly to Canadian culture and, therefore, become more informed than their parents," said Bergen.

"It is hard to establish harmonious family relations in this kind of atmosphere," he said. "My job is to encourage them to become as stable as possible."

Life wasn't too stable for Bergen and Angelika, his wife, when they moved to Vancouver from Asunción, Paraguay, in March 1989. Bergen left a job with a psychiatric hospital and responsibilities for an InterVarsity Fellowship group.

"When we first came here, many things didn't work out as planned. We didn't have legal status at first. We didn't get as much financial support as we had hoped for," said Bergen. "But I'm glad we had those experiences because now we can better identify with the church members."

> **"I have encouraged them to find a new identity in Christ."**
>
> ***Bergen***

He said his work with a marginalized church has also caused him to take a second look at his own faith. "It has challenged me to re-evaluate my basis or foundation. Do I rely on Christ or do I rely on my education? Do I trust God 100 percent?"

The Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church provides financial assistance to First United Spanish Mennonite Church. CHM is also connected to the congregation through its Hispanic Ministries and its Evangelism and Church Development departments. *Carla Reimer*

First Abraham and Sarah project a success

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Marcella Klaassen, age 78, was "on a high" after her first volunteer mission project last November.

Klaassen, of First Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan., said she had always assumed that she wouldn't qualify as a volunteer because she didn't know how to use a hammer or saw. When she was asked to lead a quilting workshop at Servant Community Church in Pismo Beach, Calif., she was glad to say yes. "I never thought that teaching someone else to quilt would be a way of serving."

Klaassen was part of a caravan that went to Pismo Beach Nov. 28-Dec. 5, 1993, to help with outreach. The caravans are part of the Abraham and Sarah project, initiated by the General Conference Mennonite Church to develop and nurture new churches.

When the people who attend Servant Community Church heard the group was coming, they were more than a little excited.

"Almost everyone at our church has no religious background. They had never encountered anything like this before," said pastor Ken Ashman. "They kept saying, 'They're coming for us.' It meant a lot to them."

Approximately 45 people are involved with Servant Community Church, which had its first worship service on Easter Sunday.

Four volunteers from Kansas led workshops on four-part Christmas singing, "living more with less," and Christmas traditions and crafts. Each evening also featured a presentation about voluntary service.

The volunteers paid for their own transportation and other expenses. They traveled to the church in a van on loan from a couple from Kansas.

The theme for the week was "Trading Hectic Days for Simple Joys." Ashman said he hoped the workshops would help introduce the church to the "ethos behind Menno-

Marilyn Miller

Caravaners: *Three volunteers (from left), Esther Bartel, Winifred Ewy and Marcella Klaassen, view a quilt donated to Servant Community Church.*

College or graduate students pursuing careers in nursing are invited to apply for loans from Mennonite Health Services and Mennonite Board of Missions. The loans, to be awarded this spring, range from $300 to $2,000 per study year. For more information, contact MHS, 21 S. 12th St., Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, (717) 859-3990, ext. 321. Applications due Feb. 1.

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Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., is offering "Music and Culture in Vienna," a three-week course in Austria, May 8-27. Community members may take the course for credit or audit. The seminar will be led by professor Bill Maust. Contact Maust at (519) 885-0220, ext. 253.

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During meetings Dec. 3-4, 1993, in Chicago the board of Mennonite Mutual Aid formally removed policy limits on investment in companies doing business with South Africa. Financial Services vice president J.B. Miller noted that Nelson Mandela, the South African Council of Churches and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility have all recommended that sanctions be lifted.

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Almost 800 people attending the Thurston County Fair in Washington state took "a penny for your thoughts" literally. Passersby were given 10 pennies, which represented the annual federal budget, and asked to distribute them among six glass jars, which represented six federal-budget items: education, health, job training and creation, the military, the environment and a final jar for all other expenses. When the pennies were added up, education was given the highest priority for federal monies, military spending the lowest. Environment and health alternated between second and third. One retired military man told the Olympia, Wash., Fellowship of Reconciliation, which ran the demonstration, why he didn't give the military more. "I've seen how the military wastes money," he said. He tossed one penny into the jar: "for my retirement check," he explained. *(Salt)*

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A young man named Milan was among those who on Dec. 1, 1993, helped unload 14,400 cans of beef and 2,300 blankets and comforters sent by Mennonite Central Committee to Belgrade, Serbia. Milan escaped Sarajevo early last November, arriving in Belgrade with nothing, says MCC staffer Mark Jantzen. Without friends or relatives in Belgrade, Milan had no place to go. He stopped by the window of a shop where a TV happened to be giving a news broadcast about Bread of Life, MCC's Serbian partner agency. "He showed up at Bread of Life headquarters at the Pentecostal Church," Jantzen says. "He said the news show had announced that although Bread of Life did not have enough food to meet demand, its workers always took time to talk. That's what he needed." Bread of Life volunteers helped Milan find a place to stay. He now works for the organization for food and "is grateful that he can do work that helps others," Jantzen says.

Community key to evangelism

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Pastor Ken Ashman believes people are attracted to Servant Community Church, Pismo Beach, Calif., because of its emphasis on community.

"Culturally, we tend to put up facades with each other," he said. "We are rated by what we achieve, by what we possess.

"I think a lot of people walk around feeling isolated. They think, 'If people knew who I was, they wouldn't accept me.' They are hungry for real relationships."

Ashman hopes that Servant Community Church can offer an alternative to the secular approach: "In the church, I have a vision that we can be a restorative community."

"I believe community is what makes the Anabaptist tradition tick. It is a relational way of being, as opposed to a prescribed approach," he said.

Ashman, who did not grow up in a Mennonite home, said his exposure to Mennonite churches has only confirmed this viewpoint. He visited between 30 and 40 Mennonite churches while he was a pastoral ministries student at Hesston (Kan.) College.

"People don't want to jump through a bunch of hoops to feel accepted," he said. "When people feel valued, then what we have to say about Jesus will matter to them." *Carla Reimer*

nite faith and culture" as well as make the congregation more visible in the local community.

Linda Kruse was one of 75 who attended the church for the first time because of the workshops. She found a flyer about it under the windshield wipers on her car. "I appreciated the fellowship I found. The people were warm and loving," she said. "It brought me back to the Lord."

"It's a real mission to reach people who haven't had much experience with the church," said Wayne Zimmerman, Reedley, Calif. "I've never been one to initiate sharing about my faith. This helped me realize that there are people who want to talk about their spiritual needs." He was one of several volunteers who came from Reedley and Paso Robles, Calif.

"These are people who are searching for something and are finding it. That's important," said Klaassen. "Sometimes our churches are not aware of local mission projects. We need to learn how to extend beyond ourselves."

Ashman is thankful for the Abraham and Sarah Caravan project. "Their presence gave a real boost to our church. They helped us build our identity," he said. "Now we feel like we are a part of the larger Mennonite community."

The next Abraham and Sarah Caravan project will take place in Miami in March. For more information, contact Abraham and Sarah Caravan project coordinators Lester and Winifred Ewy, 3202 Royer West Drive, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-2965. *Carla Reimer*

CPT member saves abducted Haitian man

Jeremie, Haiti (CPT)—Christian Peacemaker Teams member Joel Klassen witnessed the abduction and consequently helped rescue a young Haitian man on Nov. 27, 1993.

Four armed men in civilian clothes abducted 21-year-old Abner Joseph from the steps of St. Helen's Catholic Church in Jeremie, a coastal town in southwest Haiti. When Joseph's mother, Anista, 57, followed the abductors, they beat her to the ground three times.

Klassen was standing outside the rectory when neighbors came and told him the abduction was taking place. He hurried to the front of the church and tried to stop the abductors, who then brandished pistols and fled on foot with their hostage.

Cry for Justice, a coalition of volunteers in Haiti, reports that the abductors apparently chose Joseph, a hearing- and sight-impaired man in the neighborhood, when he didn't hear their order to clear the church steps. Coalition members, including Klassen, obtained Joseph's release later that evening, but in the meantime Joseph was severely beaten, suffering injury to his jaw, left arm and back. A noose was hung from a rafter, and he was threatened with death just before his release.

While Joseph was being taken, coalition members went to the military base across town to report the case and demand intervention. A guard at the base entrance told Klassen there was no officer present to receive his report. As the guard spoke, an officer drove up but said he could not investigate the case without the name of the victim, which coalition members did not have at that point.

One member went to get Joseph's name; the others went to the local headquarters of FRAPH, the Revolutionary Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti, the militant party allegedly responsible for the abduction. A cordon of armed FRAPH members met the group and threatened them, refusing them access to the building. Scores of townspeople gathered nearby in silence to watch.

The group prayed. Shortly after the prayer, a Haitian man approached, and, identifying himself as a delegate of the Prime Minister, asked in English if there was anything he could do. He said he would go into FRAPH headquarters to seek Joseph's release.

The delegate, Klassen and two others entered the compound despite verbal threats. Once inside, the delegate's rank and argument that "we cannot let foreigners see us acting this way" won Joseph's release. *Ed Kinane*

Lancaster project produces entrepreneurs

Akron, Pa. (MEDA)—Hersi Mohammed is a Somali refugee with college education but no business experience in North America. He needed a mentor to help him start a small business selling "sambousi," a Somali snack.

Ruth Moore wanted to start a small videography company but says she was "completely brain-dead" when it came to business.

Both found help at a new urban program operated by Mennonite Economic Development Associates in downtown Lancaster, Pa. Called ASSETS (A Service for Self-Employment Training and Support), the program aims to help low-income people start or expand a small business. It provides basic training, ongoing mentorship and access to small loans.

Participants meet two nights a week for 15 weeks. Volunteer instructors, many from the ranks of MEDA's Lancaster chapter, share the teaching load. Topics include market research, promotion, pricing and business law. In order to graduate, participants must complete a detailed business plan for their prospective enterprise.

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"They molded me. I got knowledge, and with knowledge came confidence."
Moore

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Small loans (up to $2,000 for new businesses; $3,000 for an existing business) are available through the Pennsylvania Mennonite Credit Union.

Graduates are matched with mentors who meet regularly with them for six months. The mentors help the fledgling entrepreneurs be realistic in their plans and projections. They also encourage the participants, some of whom have been recently unemployed or have experienced personal difficulties.

Not all graduates actually start up a new business, says Howard Good, ASSETS manager. Some take the course and find it equips them for new jobs.

Ruth Moore said taking the course boosted her confidence. "Everything I learned in the course was helpful because I knew nothing," she says. "They molded me. I got knowledge, and with knowledge came confidence."

That can be a big factor for low-income people, says ASSETS staffer J.B. Shenk. "They've experienced so much failure; why should they think they can succeed in business?"

A network of supporters provides ongoing counsel to Good and his staff. There is a 12-member advisory committee with a membership ranging from big business owners to welfare administrators. There is also a loan review committee of bankers and businesspeople. All see the program

Two dozen members and supporters of Albuquerque (N.M.) Mennonite Church vigiled Nov. 26, 1993, outside Toys 'R Us, the largest toy retailer in the United States. A statement read by Becky Zerger said, "The Albuquerque Mennonite Church urges shoppers to give children the gift of peace this holiday season by refusing to buy war toys. ... How can we truly celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace by giving toys that promote violence?" (*The Echo*)

Rebecca Pereverzoff (MCC)

Nayal Juma Nasser thought he would never be able to use his training in electrical repair, until he received a loan of 1,000 Jordanian dinars ($1,830 Canadian/$1,470 U.S.) from Mennonite Central Committee. Nasser used the loan to set up an electronics repair shop in Ghor Safi, Jordan, an economically depressed community of about 10,000 people near the southern tip of the Dead Sea. Today he sells parts for household wiring and lighting and specializes in small appliance and radio repair. In its first six months, monthly sales averaged 300 dinars ($551 Canadian/$441 U.S.). Nasser is repaying the loan more quickly than originally agreed upon.

The world's developed countries spend as much on military power in one year as the poorest 2 billion people on the earth earn in total income. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

A study of conversion stories in the early 1800s in the United States found that narrative accounts of conversion by men and women were markedly different. The study by Susan Juster, reported in MARC International's newsletter, found that women had an image of God as relational. They described God as father, friend, soulmate, lover. Men saw God as lawgiver, sovereign and king. Women viewed sin as failed or flawed relationships. For men sin meant breaking the laws or rules. For women, conversion sometimes meant liberation from oppressive fathers and husbands; whereas for men conversion sometimes was motivated by a reaction against unjust social rules.

• • •

Grace Bergey of Souderton, Pa., knows what it means to see the benefits of volunteer work realized years later. When Bergey watched the months of peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, she took pride in her former student, Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian negotiating team. Bergey taught Ashrawi English over 30 years ago as an MCC volunteer at a high school in Ramallah, in what is now the West Bank. "She was an affectionate girl," recalls Bergey, 72, who taught at the Quaker-run school from 1960-61. Bergey remembers that the Ashrawi family was concerned about the situation facing the Palestinians at that time. "The family visited us often," she says. "We talked about the Mennonite commitment to nonviolence. Maybe Hanan adopted some Mennonite ways of resolving conflicts." Although retired, Bergey, a member of Line Lexington Mennonite Church, is still actively serving by teaching English as a second language in Souderton.

as a way to share their skills and minister to "the stranger within our walls," as Shenk puts it.

"Our purpose as Christians is to help others and to use our talents wisely," says Richard Good, who heads a chain of 14 furniture stores and is a supporter of ASSETS. "I'm interested specifically in helping the less fortunate to help themselves."

Egyptian MCCer learns about North America

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—In Egypt, George Saliib helps distribute Mennonite Central Committee's canned beef. In Kansas recently, he worked shoulder to shoulder with local Mennonites canning it.

"I thought I would have a heart attack from the excitement of coming here," he said in a recent interview. "It seems like a dream."

Saliib, an accountant for MCC in Cairo, was in the Newton area Nov. 14-21, 1993, after two weeks in Akron, Pa., at MCC orientation sessions.

It is unusual for MCC to have local country personnel like Saliib take an orientation course in the United States, but there are times when country staff take on a greater role representing the agency overseas. The orientation—routine for North Americans serving overseas—gives the country staff people a better understanding of both MCC and Mennonites, said Ed Epp, area secretary for the Middle East.

A member of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt, Saliib, 24, has been working with MCC almost seven years. Part of his responsibility is distributing the canned meat.

"We are expecting five loads (of canned meat) this year," he says.

MCC distributes the meat through the local Coptic Orthodox Church, whose bishops and other church workers identify the needy.

"Some people are too shy to say they are poor," explains Saliib.

Churches may distribute the meat, along with clothing and other necessities, during Christian celebrations such as Christmas and Easter. Some churches distribute the food monthly. For the very poor, the MCC meat is the only meat they will eat all year, said Saliib.

Saliib first began working for MCC part-time when he was a student. Some of his schoolteachers were MCC workers, and his father, who works for the Coptic Orthodox Church, also worked with MCC.

The part-time job eventually became full time. "I helped them and at the same time got to practice my English," he says.

MCC is involved in a number of programs in Egypt, including employment projects through Self-Help Crafts of the World and English language instruction. *Rick Fast*

FOOD FOR RELIEF
AKRON
BREHM'S ICE CREAM IS THE BEST!

David Wiebe (MCC)

Coffee break: *George Saliib (center) with volunteers at the North Newton canning site.*

Record

● ● ▼

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service

MINISTERS

Charlotte Bueckert has begun as youth pastor at Zoar Church, Waldheim, Sask.

WORKERS

Alden Braul, Rosemary (Alta.) Church, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Yucoma, Bolivia, as an agriculturist.

Julie and **Rick Fast**, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, began a two-year MCC term in July in Akron, Pa. Julie works as Self-Help Crafts coordinator and Rick as public media assistant.

Allan Harder, Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Winnipeg as computer services manager of MCC Canada.

Rachel Diller Harder, First Church, Kitchener, Ont., and First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, began a one-year MCC term in September in Kitchener as a community worker with House of Friendship.

Ian Heisey, Kent (Ohio) Presbyterian, has begun a two-year MVS term as a peace worker in Winnipeg.

Frieda and **Gerhard Isaak**, Eben-Ezer Church, Clearbrook, B.C., began a two-year term in September at MCC Canada in Winnipeg as custodians.

Rebekah Janzen, Foothills Church, Calgary, has begun a 10-month MVS term as a child-care worker in Hutchinson, Kan.

Anne Reimer, Bethel Church, Aldergrove, B.C., works as a receptionist at MCC Supportive Care Services in Clearbrook, B.C.

Young people in British Columbia think Mennonite Central Committee is boring, old, too low-key and out of touch, according to a recent survey of Mennonite youth pastors in that province. "MCC clearly has an image problem with youth," says MCC B.C. executive director Waldo Neufeld, who talked to 14 Fraser Valley-area pastors. They told Neufeld that the best way for young people to become excited about MCC is through short-term service opportunities. Neufeld also heard that youth do not feel loyalty to institutions. "Youth have no idea why things like MCC and conferences exist," said one youth pastor. MCC Manitoba executive director Peter Peters, however, suggested that the survey results may not apply everywhere. "I find a lot of enthusiasm for MCC in rural Manitoba," he said.

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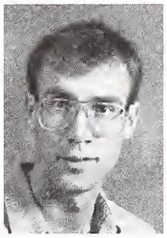
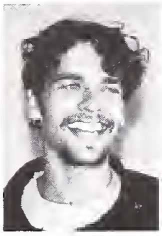

Braul

J. Fast

R. Fast

A. Harder

Diller Harder

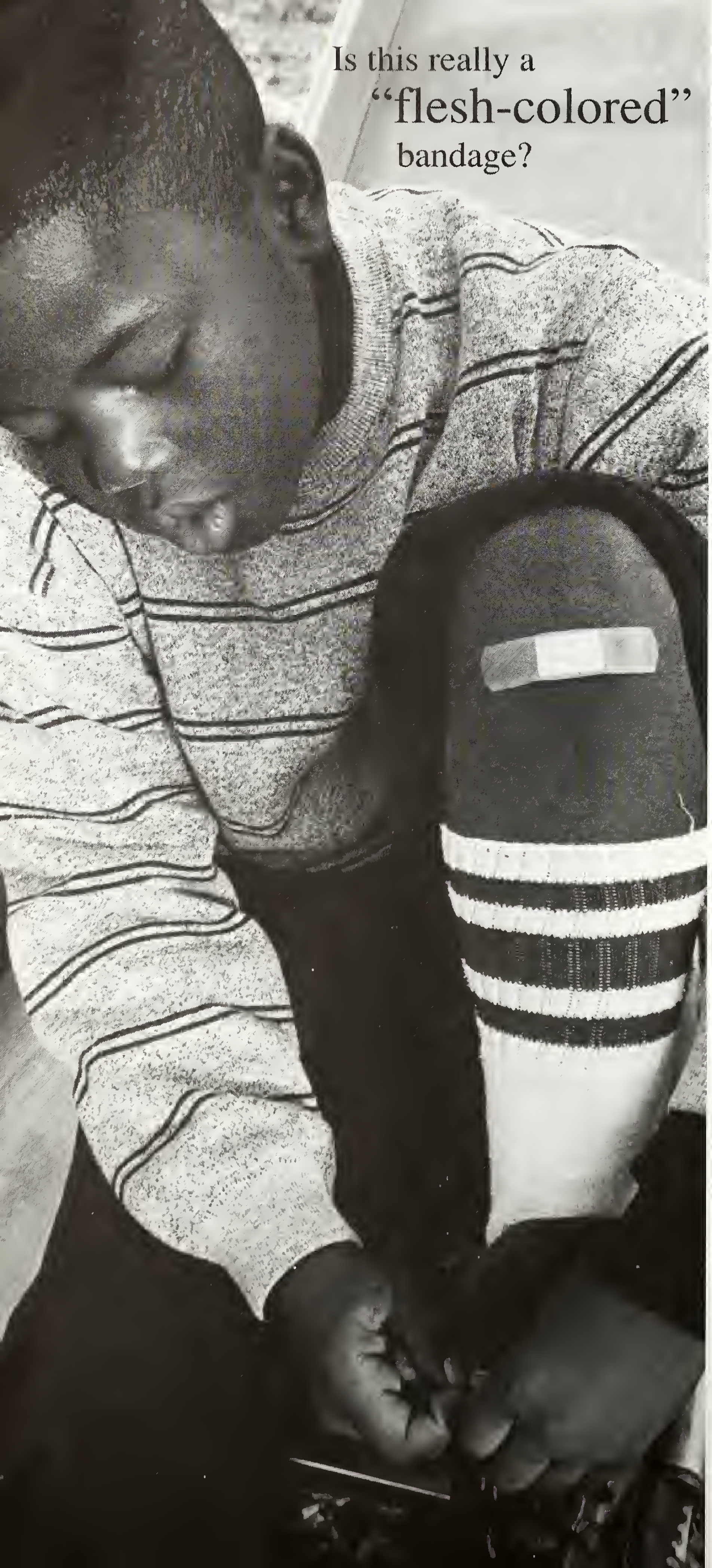

Heisey

F. Isaak

G. Isaak

Janzen

Reimer



That depends on who you are. It's easy for white North Americans to exclude others by making assumptions about race.

Consider:

•

A white child and a black child enter first grade. Will they have equal opportunities for academic success?

•

A white person and a Hispanic person are near a crime scene. Will the police suspect one more than the other?

•

A white person and a Native American person enter an unemployment office. Will the counselor presume they are equally industrious?

•

A white person and an Asian person inquire about a rental property. Will they receive the same consideration?

To examine racial assumptions, order *Challenging Racism*, junior high Bible studies (Faith & Life Press) and *Enter the River*, a book that invites adults to seek racial reconciliation (Herald Press). Call Provident Bookstore at 1-800-759-4447.

GOD ADDS the Blessing!

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

Bluffton College seeks a faculty appointee in **English** to teach writing and literature (world literature desirable). Position begins fall 1994; Ph.D. (master's considered). Evidence or promise of teaching excellence is essential. This is a new, continuing (but at this time non-tenure track) position created to accommodate recent enrollment growth. Screening begins Feb. 15. Women and minority applicants are especially welcome.

Reply to **William J. Hawk, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817, (419) 358-3317.**

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for two **Self-Help Crafts regional sales managers**. Positions available April 4. Qualifications include experience in retail management, knowledge of Self-Help products and its mission, and communication skills. Degree in business, marketing or related field preferred. Travel required to region of responsibility (Midwest, Southeast).

Interested persons contact **Goldie Kuhns, Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151.** Applications are due Feb. 1.

Dallas Mennonite Retirement Community, a multi-level retirement community, is seeking a full-time **chaplain** for a constituency of 200 people. The position is available immediately.

Please send your resumé to **Jerry Barkman, Chief Executive Officer, 248 West Ellendale, Dallas, OR 97338,** or call **(503) 623-5581.**

Mennonite Central Committee is recruiting leaders for three **Youth Discovery Teams**.

- A singing team in **Colombia** will run October 1994 to May 1995. Leaders must speak Spanish. Applications are due Feb. 15.
- A singing team in **Zambia** will run January 1995 to August 1995. Previous experience in southern Africa preferred. Applications are due March 15.
- A team on peace and conflict in **India and Indonesia** will run January 1995 to August 1995. Leaders should have mediation experience. Applications are due March 15.

Contact **MCC, Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151.**

1993 index of *The Mennonite*

To obtain a free copy of our 1993 index, write or call
Melanie Mueller
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100.

Goshen College has a one-year leave replacement with the possibility of long-term employment in the **biology** department. Responsibilities include teaching several general biology courses and associated laboratories, probably genetics, and at least one other course to be determined. Ph.D. and teaching experience preferred. Interviews began Dec. 1 and will continue until the position is filled.

Send resumé and three letters of application to **Dr. John Eby, Academic Dean., Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526, (219) 535-7503, fax (219) 535-7660.** Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **Washington Office director** in Washington, D.C. Qualifications include: skills in analysis, writing, public speaking, communication and financial and personnel management. Must have capacity for biblical/theological reflection from an Anabaptist perspective on public policy issues and ability to listen sensitively to varying constituent points of view. Bachelor's degree, travel required. Applications will be accepted until Jan. 31.

In the U.S. contact **Dwight McFadden, Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151.**

In Canada contact **MCC Canada, personnel department, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381.**

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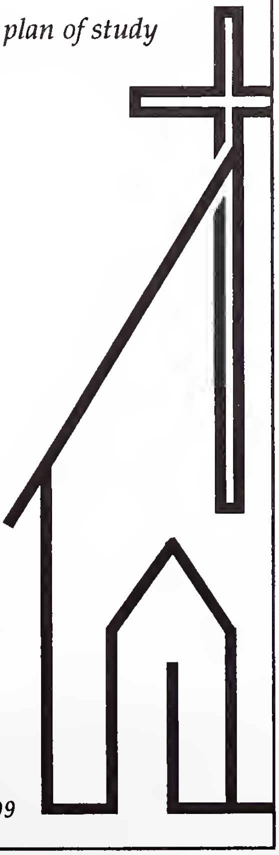

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MCC British Columbia

is searching for a person to fill the position of

Executive Director

beginning in the summer of 1994

This person will be responsible for

- the administration of MCC B.C. programs,
- promoting and interpreting MCC B.C. to the constituency and the wider public,
- coordinating the office, which includes supervising, recruiting and maintaining office staff,
- relating to the wider MCC organization and to affiliated boards, committees and other agencies.

The successful applicant must

- have a good grasp of the larger MCC program,
- have strong administrative skills and abilities,
- have a strong personal vision for MCC,
- have good communications skills, and the ability to relate well to a wide spectrum of the constituency, including youth,
- have an understanding and appreciation for a servant-leadership style,
- be able to relate well to the public.

Persons interested should send a resumé to

Dave Loewen
Personnel Committee Chair
32187 Golden Ave.,
Clearbrook, BC V2T 5C5

Phone: (604) 859-7697
Fax: (604) 859-9206

Application deadline: Feb. 28

Reviews

BOOKS

Dailies for the New Year

Praying with Jesus *by Eugene H. Peterson,* **Measuring the Days** *by Walter Wangerin Jr. and* **Strength for Today** *by Sharon Broyles (all from HarperSan Francisco, 1993)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor

These three books offer daily reflections and/or prayer for every day of the year.

Praying with Jesus is the briefest. Peterson takes readers through the Gospels of Matthew and John with readings of only a verse or two, followed by a short paragraph that offers a lesson from the text, then a question to provoke reflection, and a prayer. Peterson handles such a succinct format well, though readers will of course find some days' lessons more relevant than others.

Measuring the Days presents selections from the writings of Walter Wangerin Jr. Editor Gail McGrew Eifrig includes a suggested Bible reading at the end of each selection. These selections are longer than Peterson's but generally worth the effort. Basically, if you like Wangerin's writing (*The Book of the Dun Cow, Ragman, The Manger Is Empty*), you'll like this book.

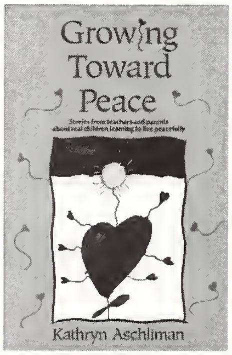
Strength for Today is written "for the chronically ill." This one surprised me the most. Pleasantly. Since I'm not chronically ill (I think), I did not expect to find it as personally relevant as I did. Each day's selection includes a Scripture reading, a meditation and a prayer. Broyles can write. Her reflections are often personal, both autobiographical and about others. Yet at other times she teaches about theology, church history or Scripture. But always, without feeling repetitive, she keeps in front of the reader how one may incorporate the experience of illness with the Christian walk.

These are only three of many such books on the market. Each of these is well written and attractively designed. They help nurture a discipline of presenting oneself daily before God's Word and listening.

Teach children peace

Growing Toward Peace *edited by Kathryn Aschliman (Herald Press, 1993, 336 pages)*

Reviewed by Connie Wedel Esau, Hesston, Kan.


Growing Toward Peace
Stories from teachers and parents about real children learning to live peacefully
Kathryn Aschliman

In a world where reports of violence diminish our hopes for our children's future, we need to understand the power of an individual to help others grow toward peace. Kathryn Aschliman shares accounts of people whose faith in Jesus Christ has empowered them to spread the love necessary in peacemaking.

Growing Toward Peace is organized in nine chapters written by students of Mary Royer, a former teacher in the elementary education department at Goshen (Ind.) College. Each chapter includes stories from teachers and parents about real children learning to live peacefully. All anecdotes identify the child's age or grade to help emphasize the developmental nature of growth toward peace.

This collection offers inspiration to parents, educators or anyone connected to children. Many of its themes are familiar—the value of self-esteem, the importance of role models and the necessity of open communication. Other discussion includes the significance of adults providing a nurturing environment, of children witnessing fair play, of physical needs being met, of celebration, of peacemaking action and of global awareness. Although each author's perspective may not give us the answers, it does encourage us to begin thinking and formulating our own strategies.

The book's strength lies in its demonstration of small steps creating big differences. A professor in a church-related college gives students the seeds of inner-personal, interpersonal and global peacemaking. These students carry the seeds throughout the world and plant them in the minds of their students. And so it continues.

"Children grow toward peace as they live with persons who practice and interpret the spirit of Christ." Through this we find the hope for the future. This volume brings testimony to the idea that through prayer, thoughtful consideration and effective strategies, we can help children grow toward peace.

South America
an unfolding of Mennonite missions in
Paraguay, Argentina, Uruguay

The Chaco Colonies, Mennonite cooperatives, the seminary, Buenos Aires with Delbert Erb, Bragado Church's 75th anniversary, the Pervajó congregation, the leprosy clinic, San Ignacio Ruins, Iguazú Falls, Asunción, Indian missions, MEDA projects.

March 7-24, Cal & Freda Redekop

TOURMAGINATION '94

Other tours:
- **Jamaica in January,** Jan. 14-21, Bob & Bertha Landers
- **Family Business Seminar**, Jamaica, Jan. 21-28, Henry Landes, Leonard Geiser
- **January Jamaica Journey**, Jan. 28- Feb. 4, Sam & Helen Lapp
- **Australia & New Zealand,** Feb. 18- Mar. 12, Leon & Nancy Stauffer, Hubert Schwartzentruber and Henry Landes
- **Anabaptist Vision for the 21st Century**, June 20- July 8, Rod Sawatsky, John Ruth, Wilmer Martin
- **Anabaptist Heritage**, Aug. 1-22,
- **European Fall Harvest,** Sept. 22- Oct. 6, Wilmer Martin, John Ruth
- **Lands of the Bible**, Sept.

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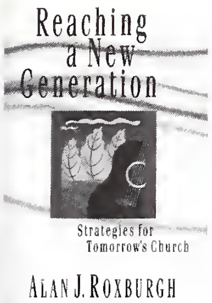
Gospel for a strange new generation

Reaching a New Generation *by Alan J. Roxburgh (InterVarsity Press, 1993, 140 pages)*

Reviewed by Jeffrey C. Long, Ephrata, Wash.

Joe MTV feels a bankruptcy of the soul; a result of being raised in a world that denies his spiritual nature. Mary Woodstock mourns the destruction of her world by clear-cutting of forests and pollution. They have both turned away from the 20th-century view that we don't need God and that humankind dominates the earth. They are looking for something new.



Unfortunately, as they turn away from these ideas, they turn away from Christianity. Christianity gradually adopted the ideas of the previous worldview. When Joe MTV sees our stained-glass edifice, he sees a relic of the past that left him empty. He turns instead to crystals and tapes of New Age gurus. Looking for fresh answers to old questions, Mary Woodstock joins a radical environmental group.

Roxburgh calls us to contextualize our faith through a serious dialogue between Scripture and the cultural context. This enables us to engage the worldview of our culture without co-opting its values. Instead of accepting Mary's worship of nature, we direct her to a God who calls us to take care of creation. We show Joe a God who heals flesh and changes lives.

Our new church in Ephrata, Wash., attracts mostly high school and college age students. But we also have spiritual grandparents who love and gently guide us as only grandparents can.

As a young church planter, I am interested in what others have learned about my "religiously impaired" young friends. This book describes our culture's effect on our ability to witness to friends. It will help you put the gospel into the context of this strange new generation, to become the spiritual grandparents it needs.

Resources

- **When Your Child Is 6 to 12** by John M. Drescher (Good Books, 1993, $8.95 U.S.) addresses the delights and difficulties of children in this stage of life, and the opportunities for shaping their religious and moral development.
- **The Story of Low German—and Plautdietsch** by Reuben Epp (The Reader's Press, 214 S. Adams, Hillsboro, KS 67063, $15.45 U.S. ppd.) provides information on the Low German language, including samples of Low German writing, maps and vocabulary lists.
- **Beyond the News: Hope for Bosnia**, a 30-minute video, presents stories of peacemaking in strife-torn Bosnia. Available from Mennonite Board of Missions Media Ministries, (800) 999-3534, $24.95 U.S./$29.95 Canadian.
- **Children and Faith: the Education and Conversion of Children** by Cornelia Lehn has been reissued. In the United States contact Faith & Life Press, (800) 743-2484 ($1.95). In Canada contact Faith & Life Press, (204) 888-6781 ($2.75).
- **The 1993-1994 MCC Resource Catalog** lists more than 400 audiovisual and printed materials about the work of Mennonite Central Committee, the environment, Native issues, hunger, peacemaking, people and cultures, and includes a children's section. For a free catalog, contact MCC in the United States at (717) 859-1151, or in Canada at (204) 261-6381, or contact your regional MCC office.
- **Silence and Courage: Income Taxes, War and Mennonites 1940-1993**, by Titus Peachey, is a new MCC occasional paper exploring the connection between taxes and war in the United States and Canada. Available for $1 U.S. /$1.25 Canadian from MCC.
- **Disarming the Heart: Toward a Vow of Nonviolence** by John Dear (Herald Press, 1993, $11.95 U.S. / $15.75 Canadian) proposes a vow of nonviolence as a first step for anyone wanting to become a true peacemaker.
- **Doing What Comes Spiritually** by John M. Drescher (Herald Press, 1993, $11.95 U.S. / $15.75 Canadian) is an updated edition of Drescher's study of the Holy Spirit, *Spirit Fruit.*
- **Peace and Reconciliation in Africa** by Harold F. Miller is a new MCC occasional paper addressing how peace and reconciliation have manifested themselves in Africa. Available for $1 U.S. /$1.25 Canadian from MCC, Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151.
- **Travel coffee mugs** made from recycled plastic milk jugs are now available from MCC. Produced by the Joint Environmental Task Force of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church, these 12-ounce mugs are available for $7 U.S. /$8.75 Canadian from MCC.
- **The Book of Daily Prayer**, compiled by Robert Webber (Eerdmans, 1993, $24.99 U.S. paperback / $39.99 U.S. cloth cover) is a devotional book to help Christian believers maintain a year-round prayer life.
- **Love Is Like Fire: The Confession of an Anabaptist Prisoner** by Peter Riedemann (Plough Publishing House, 1993, $6.00 U.S.) is a translation of writings during the author's imprisonment in the 16th century. Riedemann later joined the Hutterian Brethren, writing a confession of faith that is still in use today.
- **New Dimensions in American Religious History**, Jay P. Dolan and James P. Wind, editors (Eerdmans, 1993, $29.99 U.S. hardcover) is a collection of essays written in honor of Martin E. Marty.
- **The Fall of the Prison: Biblical Perspectives on Prison Abolition** by Lee Griffith (Eerdmans, 1993, $19.99 U.S.) calls on Christians not to rely on courts and prisons but to meet crime with biblically prescribed nonviolence, forgiveness, reconciliation and restitution.
- **The Spirit of Community** by Amitai Etzioni (Crown Publishers, 1993, $22 U.S.) offers ideas on how to make a difference in your community by grass-roots work to reawaken values, caring and commitment.
- **Family Walk Again** (Zondervan, 1993, $9.99 U.S.) provides 52 selections on topics such as self-esteem, friends, trust and mercy for daily family devotions. Designed for families with children ages 6-13.
- **Discovering God: A Devotional Journal Through the Bible** by Philip Yancey (Zondervan, 1993, $14.99 U.S.) travels through the Bible in a year, including readings from each book in the Bible.

Editorial

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Stepping across the barriers

I was lost. Driving through Philadelphia one Sunday morning, I missed the road I wanted. I had to get to the airport to catch a flight home, but now I wasn't sure I would make it.

Having lived my entire life in Kansas, where streets are generally laid out on a grid, and north-south-east-west has meaning, I became disoriented by Philadelphia's curving roadways and its five-corner intersections. Soon I found myself in an African-American section of the city. I stopped at a convenience store to ask directions. I asked a young man at the counter how to get to the airport. He spoke and gesticulated. I did not understand his long explanation, but from where he was pointing I had an idea at least of the direction I should go. I returned to my rental car.

Then another young black man came outside and gestured for me to roll down my window. He said, "Man, that guy'll [mess] you up. All you got to do is go down that street," he said as he pointed, "go one block and turn right. Then you go another block and you'll be at Highway One."

I thanked him, then followed his directions. And he was right. Soon I was on my way to the airport, and I made it in plenty of time. That young man had gone out of his way and saved me a lot of trouble.

I thought of that incident as I worked on this issue. Racism is so insidious that it hinders us from simply being human with one another. That man had overcome the barriers our society places between him and me, a white man, and had shown me some compassion. Perhaps I had stepped across a barrier by making myself vulnerable in asking directions. Nevertheless, a simple interchange took on added significance because of our respective races.

At the heart of much racism is the issue of power. As Jody Miller Shearer points out in "Through the Quagmire of Race" (page 3 of this issue), "… for whites to work in relationships of mutuality with people of color we have to understand the fundamental power that is attributed to us as white people." We whites are used to being in control of how things are done. And it's amazing what difference the color of one's skin can make.

Brown eyes: What do we do about this? One task is to try to understand how people of color may feel in our society. Ruby, a Sunday school teacher in my congregation, divided her junior high class one Sunday into two groups. During the lesson, Ruby kept encouraging those with brown eyes, affirming what they did, while she ignored those with blue or green eyes. The latter group quickly noticed the difference in how they were being treated, and they complained.

Ruby made her point. When one group of people receives not only more material wealth but is also given more attention and more encouragement, all because of the color of their eyes or skin, you have inequality. You have prejudice.

Overcoming such prejudice is no easy task. It requires repentance, a conversion from one way of thinking to another. One of the main concerns of the early church was the Jew-gentile controversy, and the apostle Paul devoted much of his life to breaking down "the dividing wall" (Ephesians 2:14) between the two groups. Racism is probably the greatest scandal of the Christian church today. As has often been pointed out, 11 a.m. on Sunday is the time of the week when blacks and whites are most segregated. We may claim to be "one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28), but our failure at racial harmony belies that verse from Scripture.

Racism is probably the greatest scandal of the Christian church today.

One place to begin tackling this injustice is to teach our children to get along. *Challenging Racism* is a curriculum from Faith & Life Press for junior highs that works at that task well. Use this and other resources to learn about breaking down barriers between races. Then perhaps we can learn from our children and act in the way Jesus teaches us.

Oh for the day when a young black man giving directions to a lost white man will not seem so significant, so unusual.
Gordon Houser

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Inside

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Getting a reputation for prayer / p. 12

Haitian unrest stalls $5 million aid plan / p. 13

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THE
Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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The fight against AIDS

"I'm there because I care about them as human beings and because I am a Christian."

After losing her son to AIDS more than four years ago, Shirley Detwiler now reaches out to people with AIDS and to their families.

- **Safety in the nursery** (see page 5)
- **Battling AIDS in Botswana and Zimbabwe** (see pages 6-9)

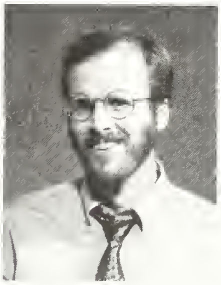
Prologue

Every day an estimated 3,500 Africans are newly infected with the AIDS virus. The World Health Organization estimates that more than 1.5 million people in Africa are suffering from the disease—two-thirds of the world total.

Read in this issue what a couple of Mennonite mission workers in Africa are doing to address this monumental tragedy. Kathleen Rempel Boschman (pages 6-8) and Elizabeth Brandt (page 9) are present with those who are suffering while working at prevention through teaching and counseling. We need to pray for the church in Africa as it proclaims the good news of Christ in this terrible situation.

AIDS is also a major problem here in North America. Shirley Detwiler (see page 3) is one person who knows the tragedy of that deadly virus and is serving as a friend and counselor to people with AIDS and their families.

The media's coverage of AIDS does not help, according to Ivan Emke (see page 10), who has written a doctoral dissertation on the Canadian media's coverage of people with AIDS.



We have received several requests from people overseas (three from India) who would like to read *The Mennonite* but cannot afford the subscription cost. Anyone who would like to contribute to our overseas subscription fund may send a check to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. *gh*

Next issue: Welcoming university students into our churches

Cover: Photo supplied by Shirley Detwiler

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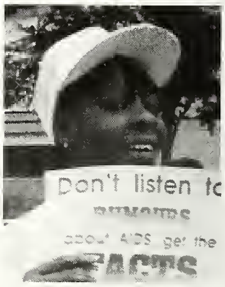

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Sometimes you Just listen

Shirley Detwiler has turned bereavement over her son's death into a ministry to people dying of AIDS.

Larry Penner

Shirley Detwiler's son Kevin died of AIDS more than 4 1/2 years ago. Today she ministers to people dying of AIDS. It's not easy. "I can't say it doesn't hurt emotionally," she says. "I do relate to my own son when this happens. Every time I go on a visit I am reliving my own son's last months, his last days."

Shirley, who attends Deep Run West Mennonite Church in Bedminster, Pa., works through hospice programs at two hospitals, Doylestown Hospital and Abington Hospital. Hospice is a holistic health-care program for people who are dying. She is also affiliated with Bucks County AIDS Network and Hyacinth Foundation, which ministers to AIDS patients in Bucks County, Pa., and in New Jersey.

Shirley learned about hospice through a coordinator who visited her while Kevin was dying. "I was in desperate need of someone to talk to," she says. Through the coordinator, she learned of other AIDS patients who needed care.

Cutting hair: Hospice does not allow people to volunteer immediately after losing a family member. So, because at first she could not work officially, she began by cutting hospice patients' hair. Kevin died on April 1, 1989. That July she was cutting the first person's hair.

"I wanted to go," she says. "Out of my own tragedy I have received a blessing, a gift that not everyone has. I have been accepted more readily because I have been there."

She remembers sitting with a patient when one of the patient's friends came in whom Shirley had not met. The friend seemed uncomfortable. "She lost a son to AIDS," the patient said. It was the only explanation needed.

"Not everyone can deal with AIDS," Shirley explains. "Fear is wiped away" when they learn about Kevin.

Fear of rejection is real for AIDS patients. They wonder which friends will visit, which will not. Too often the estrangement comes from family as well.

Shirley lost a patient two years ago this January. He was estranged from his family and cared for by a significant other. "I looked at him as another

> Fear of rejection is real for AIDS patients. They wonder which friends will visit, which will not. Too often the estrangement comes from family as well.

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> "I'm there because I care about them as human beings and because I am a Christian. If I truly believe in Christ, I couldn't look away and let a patient be there without any help. This is my calling."
>
> *Shirley Detwiler*

son," she says. "I grieve for the loss of his life but also for the separation in his family."

In her hospice work Shirley ministers to the family as well as the patient. Frequently the person she ministers to is someone "coming home" to family that had been distant. When the patient dies, she continues with the family as a bereavement counselor.

"I pay special attention to birthdays, anniversaries of deaths, holidays involved, anything that could be a low ebb for a survivor," she says. Christmas for Shirley is especially difficult. "I'm thinking of *all* the families."

Last September she called a mother on the anniversary of her son's death. "You know, I knew there was someone I'd hear from," the mother had said. "Even after their death," Shirley says, "it's important for the family to know that person had an effect on other people."

Seven hours: Shirley tries to visit her patients weekly for four hours each visit. When she sees a decline, she visits longer and more often. With one patient she stayed seven hours the night before he died and was with him a few times that week. It's not required, but "when you see a need, you avail yourself more if you can."

In her visits she does everything. "I've held their hands, I've rubbed their legs with lotion or cream, I've rubbed their back. It depends on the person. Each is different.

"Sometimes you just listen. Sometimes you feel like you're no more than a baby sitter. ... I am doing something because I'm there."

Although hospice is not explicitly Christian, Shirley's faith is inseparable from her work. "I'm there because I care about them as human beings and because I am a Christian. If I truly believe in Christ, I couldn't look away and let a patient be there without any help. This is my calling."

As for her patients, Shirley says she tries to respect their faith or lack of it. "I believe that we die the way we live," she says. "Someone's not going to change once they become ill. But yet as a Christian we always hope for that part of their life before they lose their life.

"I don't enter that subject [of faith] the first time I see someone," she says. "If God grants us enough time I will be able to talk about it."

And God has given her that opportunity before. Two years ago last October a young Catholic man she was visiting was in the final stages of AIDS. He wasn't religious and wouldn't allow the priest to see him. But he knew that Shirley was doing a Bible study while he napped. He asked her to read his Bible to him.

"I was a messenger in more than one way," she says. "I was there for a reason."

She is hoping for that opportunity with a patient she has now. He says he has too much to do yet; he isn't ready. "They don't say they are afraid," she says.

One day, as she was leaving, she stopped to squeeze his foot and said, "I know you don't want to hear this, but I pray for you."

"We take one day at a time," she says. "The longer I have patients the harder it is. I do think that there is a purpose for everything. We don't always see it."

Larry Penner is assistant editor of The Mennonite.

The fight against AIDS

Safety in the nursery

One congregation's attempt to protect people, including people with AIDS, from infections

After a member of Swamp Mennonite Church in Quakertown, Pa., adopted an AIDS baby, the congregation eventually developed this statement. The statement does not even mention AIDS, however. These practices are recommended to prevent other infections as well. It is much easier to contract hepatitis B than it is to get HIV, and since it is people with AIDS that are most at risk from infections, these measures are designed to prevent them from picking up other people's colds or other viruses at least as much as to prevent any possible spread of the HIV virus.

In an attempt to provide the safest possible environment for all members and visitors of Swamp Mennonite Church in Quakertown, Pa., the following items have been placed in the nurseries and preschool Sunday school classrooms:

- disposable rubber gloves
- Band-Aids
- alcohol pads
- wet wipes
- paper towels
- sealable spray bottle with chlorine bleach/water solution
- trash containers with foot-operated lids and plastic liners.

The nurseries also have

- disposable diapers
- disposable changing pads.

In addition, nursery linens will be laundered weekly. Nursery toys and classroom tables will be washed weekly.

For your own protection the following procedures are encouraged:

1. Wash your hands regularly.
2. Avoid putting your fingers in your mouth, nose or eyes.
3. Recognize that blood and other bodily fluids and wastes can be dangerous substances.
4. When necessity demands handling substances listed above, wear rubber gloves. Properly dispose of gloves when done.
5. Use the chlorine bleach solution for clean-up of substances listed above.
6. Cover cuts or other open wounds on yourself, your children or your students with Band-Aids or other appropriate bandages.
7. Discourage the sharing of food and drink.

In every situation normal health practices, good common sense and God-given wisdom should be employed.

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AIDS and spiritual growth

LaDell and Joyce Gautsche were serving in Jamaica with Mennonite Central Committee when they tested positive for HIV. They returned home to Denver, where they were received with loving arms by First Mennonite Church of Denver. Two years later Joyce died.

When talking about AIDS, people often talk about "victims" or "tragedy," LaDell says. But these labels don't fit Joyce and himself.

'A sort of gift': *LaDell and Joyce Gautsche*

Tragedy, to LaDell, is a sudden death, with no chance to say goodbye. Or the person who lives a long life just to question at the end if there was any meaning in those many years of life. Or the person who lives without meaningful relationships and dies alone.

"Unfortunate, sad—those words may fit our situation. And of course we have all the questions of 'what if,'" LaDell says. "But having AIDS has been a sort of gift—a time of much spiritual growth. A time to re-examine our lives.

"Much of what society says is important in life doesn't mean much to me anymore," LaDell says. Relationships—with other people and with God—are the focus of his life now.

"Life is not about answers," he says. "The goal is not living long enough to find the answers. It is in learning to live with the questions." *Cathleen Hockman*

An uphill battle against AIDS in southern Africa

An interview with Kathleen Rempel Boschman

Carla Reimer

In early 1993 the World Health Organization estimated that 15 million people worldwide are HIV positive and that 7.5 million of those infected with the AIDS virus live in sub-Saharan Africa.

Kathleen Rempel Boschman has been working with the Roman Catholic Church in Botswana since January 1993 to help prevent the spread of AIDS in that country. Officials estimate that 60,000 to 90,000 of Botswana's residents, or 5 percent to 7 percent of the population, are HIV positive. Botswana has a population of 1.3 million.

"The task is huge. Although I wish AIDS did not exist, I see it as an opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ to those in need and a way to proclaim the message of salvation," said Kathleen. She is a member of Hope Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Kathleen and her husband, Don, serve as mission workers in Botswana with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

She previously worked for four years as a hospital chaplain in Winnipeg, where she had contact with AIDS patients. She also has experience as a physical therapist.

In the following interview with Carla Reimer, General Conference news service editor, Kathleen shares about her work with AIDS in Botswana.

What surprised you about the AIDS situation in Africa?

The magnitude of the problem: In North America, heart disease and cancer are still the major causes of death. Not so in Africa. (Malaria remains the leading cause of death due to disease. And in some African countries, starvation and war are also more life-threatening than AIDS.) Already in countries such as Uganda, where 10 percent to 15 percent of the population is HIV positive, there is a whole generation of children who are orphaned because of AIDS-related deaths.

In a recent study by the government of Botswana, one in five women in the capital city of Gaborone tested positive for the AIDS virus. In Francistown, the second largest city, which lies along a major trucking route, one in three women was HIV positive. While the AIDS epidemic in Botswana has yet to reach the proportions of the crisis in Uganda, both government and nongovernmental organizations feel a need to prepare for the inevitable.

Heterosexual problem: The biggest surprise was that the major mode of HIV transmission in Botswana, as in most other parts of Africa, is through heterosexual contact. This has caused me to wonder whether the issue of AIDS in North America is carrying more of a stigma than it needs to. Perhaps the issue that needs to be looked at is sexuality as more broadly defined than simply homosexuality. Christians need to take a look at what deep spiritual need exists in a society that is addicted to sex.

Abstinence: Many people in Botswana think that it is impossible to abstain from sex. There is a popular

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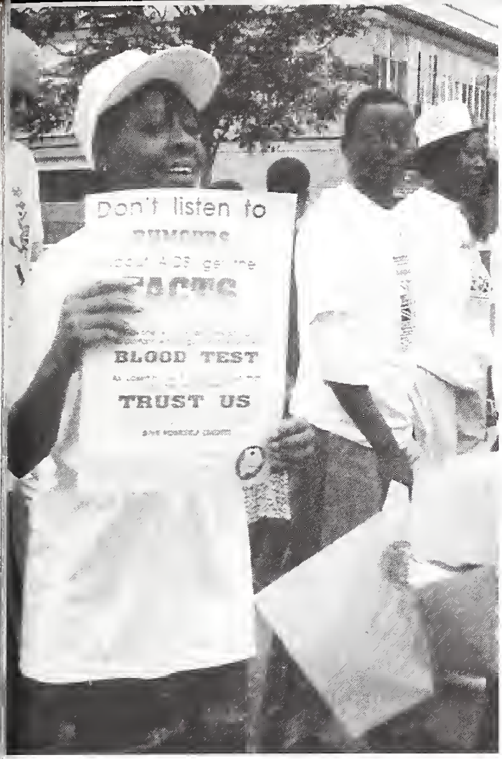
> "Christians need to take a look at what deep spiritual need exists in a society that is addicted to sex."
> *Kathleen Rempel Boschman*



Kathleen Rempel Boschman

Get the facts: *A member of the Anti-AIDS Club joins a Red Cross Society march held last November in Gabarone, Botswana.*

myth here that abstinence from sex can cause one to become mentally ill.

Initially this was disheartening to me, since I believe God intended us to abstain from sex before marriage and to remain faithful in marriage. Now I am used to the fact that a good percentage of the youth groups I speak to consider my words irrelevant and even foolish.

As a result of this widespread belief, the government's proposed solution to the AIDS problem is to encourage people to use a condom with every sexual encounter. Condoms are readily available not only at clinics, but in most restaurants, bars and corner stores. Huge billboards line the roadways reading, "AIDS: It's your problem too, use a condom."

Even little children are picking up this message and singing the jingles that accompany the condom ads on the radio. The government has a lot more money and clout with the media than we do as a small church organization; therefore, their message is louder.

Still, I carry on in the faith that the message of God's help in the area of sexuality is an important one to teach to every generation, and maybe a few lives will be saved as a result.

Describe the nature of your work.

The Roman Catholic Church, which began its AIDS work in fall 1992, is the first church in Botswana to organize a response to the AIDS crisis here. While the Catholic Church has the strongest Christian presence of any single denomination in Botswana, it represents only 5 percent of the population. I work together with a Catholic sister to coordinate the following programs:

1. Education: During the 1993 Lenten season we prepared a series of lessons for three age groups: adults, teens and children. We felt Lent was an opportune time to reflect on human love and sex and to ask how we might change so that these gifts may be restored as life-giving forces. We offered several workshops to parish educators in various parts of the country to explain the materials we had developed. Our goal is to train people who work at the grass-roots level.

2. Home-based care: We were inspired by the example of church members in a parish in Uganda. Without any specific training they organized themselves into small groups and asked village families who have members suffering from AIDS if they needed help with simple things such as child care, yard work and cooking. They also prayed for the people they visited, and many came to faith through their witness. We have begun our first 10-week course in home-based care. The volunteers are learning basics such as patient care, infection control and counseling skills. They are linked to local clinics, which act as a referral source.

3. Anti-AIDS clubs: We have begun our first club in a local Catholic high school. About 70 girls and three boys showed up for the first meeting. We had a lively and open discussion about the pressures they feel to become sexually active. We also outlined the three promises they have to make in order to become club members: (1) to try to abstain from sex until marriage, (2) to be a friend to people who have AIDS, and (3) to tell their friends and relatives what they learn in the meetings. We feel strongly that group support for choosing a Christian lifestyle is the only way to counter peer pressure to do the opposite.

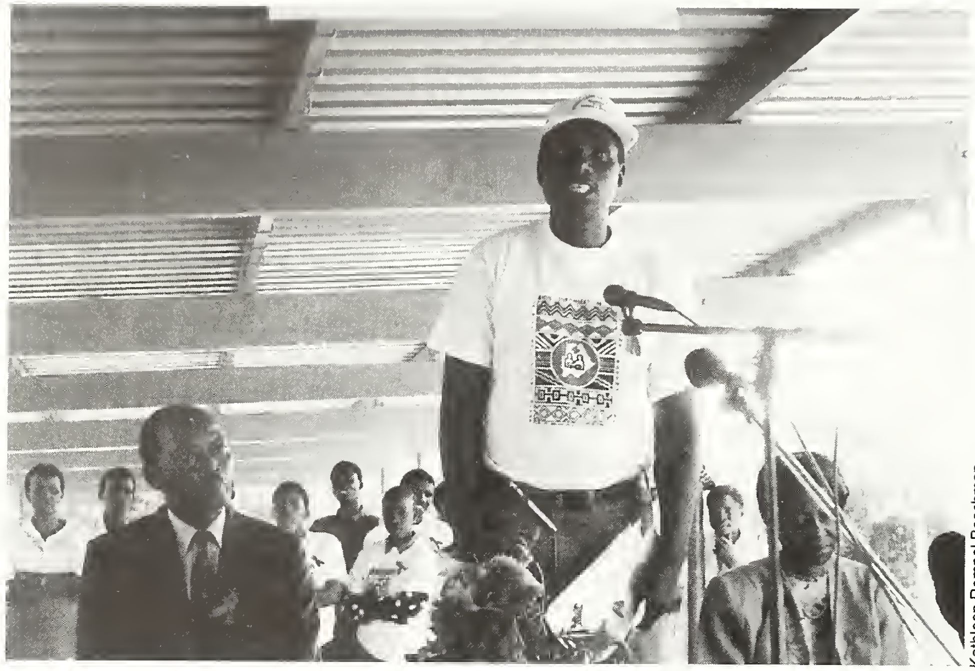
4. AIDS counseling: I have developed a manual for training priests and sisters in AIDS counseling. Our goal is to train all interested Catholic priests and sisters in Botswana to do AIDS counseling. So far we have trained 25 of the 97 priests and sisters.

What are some of the dilemmas you face in your efforts to prevent the spread of AIDS?

I would like to relate a scenario that frequently occurs in this culture. Many married men have one or more girlfriends. However, they have the expectation that their wives should remain faithful to them. Also, many men leave their homes and families in order to find employment in larger villages or cities. Women often fear the return of their husbands, since they know their husbands' lifestyles put them at risk for contracting AIDS.

These women are in an impossible bind. If they refuse to sleep with their husbands they will be guilty of accusing their husbands of being unfaithful. In this culture women are never to accuse their husbands of being unfaithful, even if it is true. It is culturally acceptable for men to beat their wives under these circumstances. Many husbands will divorce their wives if they refuse to sleep with them

> Many husbands will divorce their wives if they refuse to sleep with them or if they insist that they use a condom.



Kathleen Rempel Boschman

Tremendous social change: *Botswana's first HIV-positive person to go public speaks at Princess Marina Hospital in Gabarone.*

> I have spoken to young people who are so disillusioned with the idea of marriage that they feel they won't ever marry.

or if they insist that they use a condom.

This incident highlights an ethical dilemma we as AIDS counselors face. If we counsel women to protect themselves either by refusing to sleep with their husbands or by using a condom, we are putting the women at risk physically and economically. We also run the risk of appearing to be encouraging people to divorce.

Furthermore, in my training of Catholic priests and sisters, I often bump up against resistance to the suggestion that a married couple use a condom as a second best option to abstinence. Some of them are unable to separate their objection to condom usage for purposes of birth control from the usage of condoms for medical purposes.

I often despair over how hard it is to encourage people to strive for a life of abstinence before marriage and faithfulness to one person within marriage.

In your experience, what factors make it difficult for people in Botswana to change their sexual behavior and values?

AIDS has come to Botswana at a time of tremendous social change. Just one to two generations have passed since the time when young men and women went to initiation school at the onset of puberty. There they were taught the role of a man or a woman in the home. Following the training, they were betrothed, albeit at an early age.

With the introduction of Western ways has come the need for higher education for both males and females, which has resulted in changing gender roles. At times there is a clash between traditional and modern ways. Many young people who have not redefined their roles fail in their marriages.

I have spoken to young people who are so disillusioned with the idea of marriage that they feel they won't ever marry. Many of these people still place a high value on having children. So they seek intimacy not for building a relationship but for procreation.

Another destabilizing influence on marriage is the history of mine labor. For several generations now men seeking employment have gone to South Africa to work in the gold mines. The work contracts are for several years. The men are allowed to return home to their families for only several weeks per year and are forced to live in huge hostels on the mine site. Until recently, the apartheid laws forbade the men to build or rent family dwellings near the mines.

In addition, the Botswana government, which employs many citizens, splits up married couples if their skills are required in different parts of the country. Many Christians have tried to protest this practice, but to no avail.

It has been helpful to me to see the social and economic strains that people live under in order to understand better the problem of promiscuity as it occurs here.

Many of our volunteers feel strongly that AIDS is God's judgment upon a promiscuous society. For them traditional African values line up with the gospel message of faithfulness to one's spouse. They bemoan the loss of traditional ways. What has been a great witness to me is that these same volunteers feel a great deal of compassion for people with AIDS.

The fight against AIDS

The fight against AIDS

Morality saves lives

AIDS educator in Zimbabwe teaches biblical morality.

Paul Schrag

The brilliant sunlight of an African noon barely pierces the darkness in the tiny grass-roofed hut where Nukuthula lies suffering from AIDS.

Kneeling at the young woman's bedside, Brethren in Christ mission worker Elizabeth Brandt prays aloud for Nukuthula, a Christian. Part of Nukuthula's family has rejected her because she refuses to see a witch doctor about her illness.

Playing outside is Nukuthula's 4-year-old daughter, who was born with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. She has exceeded the typical life span of African children with HIV, who often die before they are two.

Elizabeth brings new sheets for Nukuthula, who lies on blankets because she has no mattress. Nukuthula smiles and thanks her.

Later in the day Elizabeth had planned to visit a young man with AIDS. But she receives word that he died last night.

Such are the realities of AIDS in Africa, where the deadly epidemic is growing at a frightening rate. The World Health Organization estimates that one in 40 adults in sub-Saharan Africa is infected with HIV.

"I have little hope for this generation, but my hope lies in the children," Elizabeth said. The Lancaster, Pa., native spreads hope by teaching that abstaining from premarital and extramarital sex is not only moral but also the way to stay alive.

Hospital statistics reflect the explosiveness of the AIDS epidemic. The number of patients testing positive for the virus doubles every year.

In nearby Bulawayo, one in five sexually active men is infected with HIV, and one in eight pregnant women has the virus. To save the next generation, Elizabeth says, AIDS education must start early. "People in their early 20s have AIDS, meaning they got it when they were 12, 13, 14," she says.

'Sugar daddies': The spread of HIV among girls is made worse by "sugar daddies"—men who seek younger sex partners, fearing that older ones are infected. Often the man doesn't know he already has the virus, and he gives it to the girl.

AIDS education is all the more important because HIV carriers may live in ignorance for years, not knowing their promiscuity has put them and their partners under a death sentence.

Elizabeth, a registered nurse, extended her front-line battle against AIDS last May when she began her education ministry. Mennonite Central Committee provides funds for her work. She has spoken to youth, men's and women's groups, emphasizing the need to follow biblical principles.

"People need to know why God created sex, that there are a lot of benefits to abstinence other than avoiding disease—the joy of being obedient to God, the strength that comes from self-discipline," she says.

Paul Schrag

'Love means being faithful': *Brandt*

Elizabeth also encourages African traditions. Families used to arrange proper marriages, she says, but now men and women often live together without getting married and have less commitment to a single partner.

One reason for the marriage decline is the large fee a man must pay a bride's parents. Parents today often demand unreasonable amounts. A man who has to work five years to save enough money to marry is likely to be sexually active during that time.

Miners: Promiscuity among heterosexual men is causing AIDS to spread much more rapidly among heterosexuals in Africa than in North America. Miners and construction workers often are separated from their families for months and patronize the same HIV-infected prostitutes.

Some Africans don't believe AIDS is spread during sexual contact. Their traditions say illnesses are caused by bad relationships between people.

It is difficult to get people to change their behavior. A group of men Elizabeth spoke to blamed AIDS on women and resisted her advice to be faithful to their wives. When she talked about the Bible's teaching that husbands love their wives, they asked what that meant. She said love means being faithful.

She tries to dispel people's fear of AIDS victims and recruit volunteers to care for those suffering in their homes.

"We want to emphasize the spiritual care aspect of it," she said. "These people know they are dying and need to be confronted with eternity—do they know Christ?—so they can be at peace about their death."

Paul Schrag is managing editor of Mennonite Weekly Review. *He wrote this article for Meetinghouse.*

Letters

Marriage not always healthy

I was appalled at the simple-minded notion put forth by Sara Wenger Shenk (Dec. 14 issue, page 11) that keeping families intact is necessarily best for the children involved. It's this attitude that has for so long made Mennonite homes havens for abuse of children and adults alike.

Marriage was blessed by God as a sanctuary, an institution meant to nurture family members. Marriage, like the Sabbath, was made for human beings, not human beings for marriage. People need homes in which they can breathe freely, families in which each member, child and adult, can grow and learn and express feelings without fear of physical or emotional retribution. An environment in which one member sets the rules for everyone else, in which anger is either denied or expressed destructively, in which appearances count for more than reality, is not a healthy environment in which to live, for either adult or child.

Children need homes in which they are loved, their emotional and physical needs are met, and they are free to be themselves. So do their parents. It's hard to provide that kind of home as a single parent, but harder still with a marriage partner who is unwilling to participate in a healthy relationship. Wenger Shenk quotes a *Washington Post* columnist as stating that "people tend to parent as they were parented." This is true; children who grow up with abusive or neglectful parents are likely to choose that kind of mate and create a family as destructive as the one from which they came. If we want our children to do a better job of parenting than our parents did, we'd better set for them the model of choosing healthy, open, mutual relationships in which each person enjoys equal power and respect. This is the best possible gift we can give our children: a model for choosing a healthy marriage for themselves.

If Mennonites wonder why so many people raised Mennonite leave the church as adults, they should try looking at the quality of life in those intact Mennonite homes that Wenger Shenk so admires. *Susan Rensberger, Greenfield, Wis.*

Listen to young adults

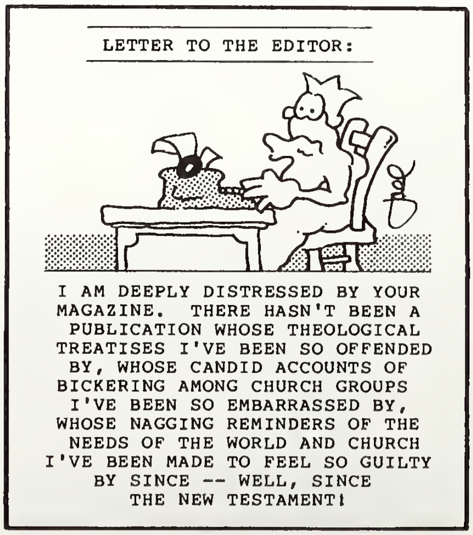
I would like to commend the staff of *The Mennonite* for the Nov. 23 issue highlighting singles in the church, especially young adult singles. Although I may not agree with some of the statements, I do feel we need to listen to our young adults and hear more from them. Thanks for allowing them to speak and to challenge those of us who are over 50. *Marlene Suter, Markham, Ill.*

Thanks for *The Mennonite*

I have been an interested reader of *The Mennonite* for many years. It has been enriching for me. Thank you for your good work that inspires many. *Werner Franz, Asunción, Paraguay*

We enjoy reading *The Mennonite*. Even though we do not always agree with the opinions expressed in the letters, there is a lot of food for thought. May the Lord give you wisdom and guidance as you continue your work. *A. Hiebert, Warman, Sask.*

Pontius' Puddle


LETTER TO THE EDITOR:
I AM DEEPLY DISTRESSED BY YOUR MAGAZINE. THERE HASN'T BEEN A PUBLICATION WHOSE THEOLOGICAL TREATISES I'VE BEEN SO OFFENDED BY, WHOSE CANDID ACCOUNTS OF BICKERING AMONG CHURCH GROUPS I'VE BEEN SO EMBARRASSED BY, WHOSE NAGGING REMINDERS OF THE NEEDS OF THE WORLD AND CHURCH I'VE BEEN MADE TO FEEL SO GUILTY BY SINCE -- WELL, SINCE THE NEW TESTAMENT!

© Joel Kauffmann

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*

Speaking out

Don't let the media tell you about AIDS

Accounts in Canada of PWAs are misleading.

Ivan Emke

Most Canadians only experience AIDS through the media. They have no direct experience for judging media reports. For them the media's messages have become a litany—a series of familiar invocations that achieve credibility through repetition. This litany has not been a monologue but has demanded audience response. Like the litanies we read in church, the response is expected to be in the same spirit as the litany itself.

Over time these litanies become a part of our taken-for-granted world. In the mainstream media, this has reinforced misrepresentations about AIDS (see box on next page).

Beneath all of these statements lies fear of the unfamiliar. But we might well expect such responses, as AIDS brings together issues we cannot handle with ease: death and sex.

Untold stories: One problem with a litany is that its repetition leaves little room to develop the story further. On rare occasions a major media outlet will do an in-depth AIDS piece. But the routine AIDS coverage is from news wire services, and it focuses on the hypothetical, the unusual and the unlikely. The remote chance of casual transmission of HIV is given serious consideration, the few cases of PWAs

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

(people with AIDS) who act inappropriately are covered extensively, and any minor scientific advances become earth-shattering discoveries. (*Macleans*, for example, almost invariably presents these medical stories with headlines such as, "Another Promising Treatment" or, "New Drug Shows Hope.")

Thus there are many stories left untold; here is my short list of three:

1. Support networks: The development of support networks for PWAs compares favorably with church-related service efforts. Within a short time, AIDS projects have emerged in most major population centers in Canada, largely originating from local gay and lesbian groups. They include educational ventures, support and psychosocial services or physical assistance. They secure funding, produce pamphlets, organize PWA groups and stand against local prejudices. Some of these groups also push for the earlier release of promising experimental treatments. This pressure has led to some success, and other patient groups are beginning to follow the model of the AIDS activists.

2. AIDS as metaphor: The use of AIDS as a metaphor and scare tactic has limited the assistance PWAs receive. Organized religion has been more prone to use AIDS as a metaphor rather than to stand with those affected. Some of the most misleading material on AIDS that I have ever seen was published by evangelistic groups, such as Chick Tracts and the Jack van Impe organization. Such condemnatory rhetoric serves as a call to action that limits one person's freedoms in the name of another person's ethics. Impe's diatribes on AIDS, for example, fostered panic in a small community in Nova Scotia, resulting in the marking and banishment of a once-popular teacher who was HIV-positive.

Misrepresentations in the media

1. AIDS is a death sentence.
2. You only get AIDS if you're a member of a "risk group."
3. Some people with AIDS (PWAs) are innocent and some are guilty, but they are all "victims."
4. AIDS is the same thing as HIV.
5. Science will find a cure soon.
6. Education is only a short-term solution.
7. Our society would be safer if more people would take the HIV test.
8. AIDS is what you get for being gay.
9. Safer sex doesn't work.
10. Our government is doing all it can to help.

On the positive side, in the past five years we have begun to see a useful response from certain churches. There are MCC personnel assigned to the care and support of PWAs. Many cities hold an interfaith AIDS vigil of prayer during local AIDS awareness weeks. Other areas have established working groups that provide resources to churches and individuals who wish to work with PWAs. For example, the Interfaith Association on AIDS in Edmonton prepared and distributes the manual *A Time for Healing: An HIV/AIDS Resource for Faith Communities.*

3. Stories of courage: Individual stories of courage in the midst of pain go unreported. Sometimes it is in facing death that we can most clearly see the victory of the human spirit. However, in the handful of media stories that I have seen on individual PWAs, the theme is usually sensationalist. The encouraged position is one of pity. If visuals accompany the story, they may feature an emaciated body, either surrounded by machines or in a shabby apartment. It is only in stories of PWAs that the media considers "innocent" that PWAs are pictured at home, surrounded by family or friends.

I suppose it is hard for editors to resist the temptation to write tragedies, but such coverage demeans the everyday challenges and small victories of PWAs. If the "hook" of the story is the sadness of the young dying, no wonder we do not learn of the joys that PWAs can still experience. No wonder few PWAs are willing to speak to the media. Who wants to become a symbol of death?

But there are people who have been actively living with AIDS for well over a decade. No one yet knows how long someone can survive with HIV in their system. The upper limits have not yet been reached. These are the stories that give other PWAs hope, stories that would shatter our tendency to write off those who are HIV-positive.

Yet even in death there are stories. For Mennonites, who share a quilting heritage, the story of the AIDS Quilt should speak to us. In times past, when people actually made quilts out of leftover material, the finished product represented a mosaic of people and relationships and events. Each piece could remind the maker and the viewer of some special person or time.

It was in this spirit that, in 1987, the idea for the AIDS Quilt was born. People remembered their friends, family members and lovers who had died from AIDS-related complications by creating a three-foot-by-six-foot patch of memorial. These pieces were then put together in an enormous quilt, which could cover several large hockey arenas. Every week more panels are being made. Some patches contain simply a name, some include pictures and words, some incorporate articles of clothing. Not only are people remembered, but the community that remains is reaffirmed, much like in the old-fashioned quilting bees.

Organized religion has been more prone to use AIDS as a metaphor rather than to stand with those affected.

If the mainstream media does not give us a full picture of AIDS, where might we find it?

The best way to counter what we are told about AIDS is to get to know a person living with AIDS. If we are honest with them, our fear may turn to comfort, our pity to support. In many ways, PWAs are the best antidote to the media litany. For through them we have the chance to better understand what AIDS means. And to come to such an understanding is important, for we all, in some way, live with AIDS.

Ivan Emke teaches sociology at Memorial University of Newfoundland's Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in Corner Brook, Newfoundland. He conducted doctoral research on the media construction of AIDS in Canada, and post-doctoral research on AIDS treatment activities. He wrote this article for Meetinghouse.

Learning to pray

Getting a reputation for prayer

What if Mennonites were as well known for praying as for serving?

Marlene Kropf

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of nurture and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries in Elkhart, Ind.

Our reputation for assisting people in need is well established. When I meet strangers on a plane or train, I discover that people often identify Mennonites as those who serve. Thanks to media coverage of Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Disaster Service stories, we have earned a reputation for "muscular Christianity."

I'm glad to be part of a people who know how to roll up their shirt sleeves and go to work when disaster strikes. But I wonder what it would be like to also be recognized as people who pray. I wonder how our life together would be different if prayer were as natural a response as service.

In their book *Liberation of Life* (The Upper Room, 1976), Harvey and Lois Seifert suggest, "There are two wings by which we rise, one being personal piety and the other community charity. No one can fly by flapping only one wing. It is impossible to be sincere in our worship of God without expecting to do the will of God. It is equally impossible to do the full will of God without the guidance and empowerment of a vital personal relationship with God."

Such a perspective is, of course, rooted in Jesus' own life and teaching. When Jewish legal experts asked Jesus which was the greatest commandment, he summarized the whole of biblical spirituality by answering, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind … and love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39).

Because prayer is fundamentally a relationship with God, it is a basic and necessary expression of our love for God. Out of our love and communion with God come forth the actions of obedience, service and peacemaking by which we express our love of God in the world.

So what would it take for Mennonites to become as well known for praying as for serving? The tack usually taken by this column is to suggest ways to nurture our personal lives of prayer. As important as personal prayer is for spiritual health, it cannot bear the whole weight. Another important consideration is how congregations pray together. A healthy relationship with God is also dependent upon whether or not we nurture our corporate life of prayer.

Paul Brubaker (MCC)

To prompt our discussion, I suggest five arenas that deserve attention when it comes to corporate prayer:

1. Common worship: When I visit congregations, I'm sometimes startled to realize that only one prayer has been offered in a Sunday morning service (not counting hymns, which are prayers—but then people are often unaware that they're praying when they're singing). Shouldn't Sunday morning be a time for explicit attention to and practice of prayer?

2. Small group life: Often I hear people mourn the absence of a strong spiritual component in their small groups. Whether groups meet weekly or monthly, shouldn't praying together be one of the ways they regularly support each other and the ministries of the congregation?

3. Decision making: Church leaders regularly begin business meetings with an opening prayer. But is prayer a conscious part of our decision-making process? Might we discover ways to go beyond "blessing the proceedings" and enter into an active dialogue with the Spirit of God in the midst of congregational business?

4. Retreats: In a time when people's lives seem over-full, and they struggle to find time to nurture their relationship with God, some congregations are planning special "quiet days" at the church or at a nearby church camp. A leader guides people in reflection on Scripture, prayer and periods of silence to reawaken and expand their relationship with God. Last month pastors across the church received a guide for a Lenten Quiet Day. Ask your pastor for more information, or call me at (219) 294-7523.

Can people more comfortable expressing their faith with hammers also find themselves at home on their knees before God?

5. Prayer rooms: If someone wanted to spend time alone in prayer at your church, where would they go? Some churches have included a prayer room in their building plans. Simply decorated, these spaces invite and encourage attention to God's presence in the midst of congregational life.

What do you think? Can people who are more comfortable expressing their faith with hammers and shovels also find themselves at home on their knees before God?

News

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Haitian unrest stalls $5 million aid plan

Newton, Kan.—A $5 million development project of Mennonite Economic Development Associates for Haiti is being kept on the drawing board by the country's continued unrest.

The Canadian International Development Agency awarded MEDA a $5 million contract to manage a short-term job creation program in Haiti in September 1993. The program was to begin when exiled Haitian president Jean Bertrand Aristide returned to power last October. But when Aristide's return was indefinitely delayed, so was the project.

"It's difficult to operate in the current Haitian environment," says MEDA director of international operations Allan Sauder. "You can't do this type of work in isolation from municipal authorities."

Sauder said implementation would probably wait until a political solution approved by the Organization of American States is achieved.

The project would aim to help jump start the Haitian economy after two years of political turmoil and a foreign embargo that depleted the capital of traders and farmers in the impoverished Caribbean country.

Million days of work: Called the Emergency Fund for Civil Reconstruction, the project would establish one million person-days of employment over the next three to five years. This would increase the buying power of some of the most vulnerable sectors of the population, which have seen their household income nearly vanish since Aristide was toppled by a military coup in the fall of 1991. Among the projects envisioned are rehabilitated physical infrastructure: roads, canals, sewers and public areas.

Unemployment, particularly in Port-au-Prince, the capital, has increased sharply as assembly industries fled the country amid the unrest. By the end of 1991, some 128,000 people had been laid off in Port-au-Prince, an estimated 50 percent of the formal sector work-force. Some 400,000 people have been forced to migrate internally. Inflation is running at 33 to 40 percent. It is estimated that the average family spends two-thirds of its income to meet minimum food requirements.

Despite the delay, Sauder remains optimistic about the program. "This is exactly what is needed in Haiti: increasing the buying power of the poor."

Two staff have been named to administer the program, Jean Claude

Emily Will (MCC)

Told to wait: *The daughter of a Mennonite soil conservation educator attends church in Desarmes, Haiti. Haitians are increasingly feeling abandoned by the international community.*

Inside the news

Russian immigrants occupy army barracks / p. 14

First Bethel program to Mexico / p. 14

Will U.S. health-care reform outdate MMA? / p. 16

Ministry conference raises questions of church's future / p. 16

Peacemakers enter virtual reality / p. 17

Women's association offers hope to abused women in India / p. 18

Fifteen artists will represent the Mennonite arts in a February exhibit at the Carnegie Arts Center, Covington, Ky. The show, "Mennonite Experience: Present Day Expression," opens Feb. 4 to coincide with the Mennonite Arts Weekend sponsored by the Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship. The show remains open through Feb. 26.

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Fifty-one participants in the Christian Peacemaker Congress have committed to a fast in memory of the 4,000 Haitians killed by that country's military in the last two years. The congress was held Dec. 30, 1993,-Jan. 2 in Chicago. Participants will set their own lengths and frequencies of fasting. Supporters are invited to join the fast and inform the Christian Peacemaker Teams office of their intent. The goal is to invite 4,000 North Americans to participate, one for each Haitian killed by the military. Also at the conference, 150 participated in a protest of war toys at a Toys 'R Us store. Participants followed three "Magi" into the store, where the Magi held a 30-minute teach-in about the effect of violent toys on children.

The Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education will hold its annual Congress on Urban Ministry April 11-14 in Chicago. Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary participates in SCUPE. Contact SCUPE at (312) 944-2153.

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Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., senior Arthur Marks will be the tenor soloist in Schubert's "Mass in G" with the Kansas City Symphony March 4-6. Marks, originally from Kansas City, Kan., majors in music and social work at Bethel.

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Protestant pastors in Bavaria get incentives for using their bicycles more often. According to new travel accounting guidelines they are reimbursed 10¢ per mile when using their bikes for travel but are not reimbursed for using cars for distances less than 1 1/2 miles. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)

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Mennonot, a magazine for "Mennonites on the margins," ran its first issue in October 1993. The initial run of 200 copies is nearly gone, but more may be printed. Readers may reserve upcoming issues for $2.50 per issue. Contact Steve Mullet, 1721 Roys Ave., Elkhart, IN 46516.

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Rosthern (Sask.) Mennonite Youth Farm will celebrate its 50th anniversary June 10-12. Past volunteers, board members, employees and supporters are invited to the celebration. A new $1.1 million, 22-unit living project for seniors will be dedicated at the celebration. Contact David Ratzlaff at Mennonite Nursing Homes, Box 370, Rosthern, SK SOK 3R0, (306) 232-4861, fax (306) 232-5611.

Cerin as associate director and Todd Hart as logistics manager. Futher staff appointments are on hold until the political situation stabilizes.

Menno immigrants occupy army bases in Germany

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Apartments that once housed Russian military personnel in former East Germany will now be home to immigrant "Aussiedler," people of German descent who have left the former Soviet Union.

In the next few years as many as 1,000 Aussiedler of Mennonite background will settle in a corner of what used to be a 20,600-hectare/50,880-acre Russian military zone—including an airport for military helicopters and fighter jets—located some 70 kilometers/43 miles south of Berlin. German government officials gave their final stamp of approval to the project on Dec. 15.

Mennonite Central Committee workers welcome arriving Aussiedler and help orient them to their new setting.

Guidance: "Simply being present and answering basic questions about life in Germany is important,"say Karl and Kathy Koop, MCC workers in Germany. "Many Aussiedler also need guidance in finding their way through all the paperwork required by the German government.

"Some, especially those who have left family behind, need a great deal of emotional support and hours of encouragement. Others are dealing with alcohol or drug addictions and need help finding alternative ways of coping with life's new challenges," say the Koops, of Vineland, Ont.

They say that after 70 years of living under communism, Mennonite Aussiedler have "virtually no knowledge of their own history or Christian tradition.

"Unlike the Aussiedler who left the Soviet Union years ago, most now are not preoccupied with questions about women's head-coverings or the importance of standing while praying. Their questions are much more fundamental and basic: Does God exist? Who is Jesus? What does it mean to belong to a church?"

The Koops and other workers have been involved since last October in planning weekly church services in Niedergoersdorf—the name of the new settlement. Some Aussiedler families have been living in temporary housing near the former military base.

The Koops wonder what the future holds for Aussiedler of Mennonite heritage in East Germany: "Will integration into German society be difficult? Will they find jobs in a region where unemployment is as high as 15 percent to 17 percent? Will they become established in Mennonite faith communities?"

Bethel sends first students to Mexico

North Newton, Kan.—Five students from Bethel College here will leave Jan. 30 for Mexico as the first participants in the college's new international study and internship program. The program, co-sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee, will provide a work setting for students related to their majors. Participants will live with Mexican families to learn firsthand about Mexican culture and customs.

The students will drive to Cuernavaca, Mexico, in a 15-passenger van, studying on the way. "The trip down will in and of itself be part of the introduction to Mexico," says Mary McKay, who coordinates the progam with Paul, her husband. They have planned a stop at the U.S.-Mexican border to study border problems: drugs, immigration, and the living and working conditions of the Maquiladora zone, where several United States companies have set up shop just over the border in Mexico.

Immersion: By immersing students in professional fields in Mexico, they will not only become familiar with the Mexican culture and Spanish language but will recognize the importance of Hispanic culture within the United States, Paul says. "We hope that students will come out with a much better knowledge of Mexico, one not based on stereotypes," says Mary.

The program offers juniors and seniors several weeks of intensive Spanish language and culture studies, followed by a four- to eight-week internship placement with a Mexican business or with a government or private volunteer agency. It is offered

'We hope students will come out with a much better knowledge of Mexico, one not based on stereotypes.'

Mary McKay

at no cost above normal tuition, room and board.

"This program will enhance professional international education, providing proficiency in Spanish as well as the cross-cultural skills required to maintain America's competitive edge in the global economy," says college president John E. Zehr.

Aaron Deckert, an environmental studies student from Marion, S.D., will be among the first students to participate. He will work with soil and water conservation in an environmental education program at the Center for Environmental Education and Ecological Action.

Aimee Leisy, an education major from Wichita, Kan., will teach English and assist in other subjects at a Mexican school.

Tim Myron, a business major from Phoenix, will work in enterprise development to help local people find ways to support themselves without destroying the rain forests. He will work through a World Wildlife Federation-assisted program.

Steve Stonehouse, a social work and international development major from Newton, Kan., will intern at Casa Alianza, a shelter for homeless children in Mexico City. Casa Alianza is a branch of Covenant House, based in New York City.

Anthony Valdez, a communication arts major from Dallas, Texas, will work in communications with the Center for Environmental Education and Ecological Action. He will work with education programming and television production for national broadcast.

Fern Gerber, associate professor of nursing at Bethel, will also spend the spring in Mexico, exploring options for nursing students.

Used clothing means income for Jamaican women

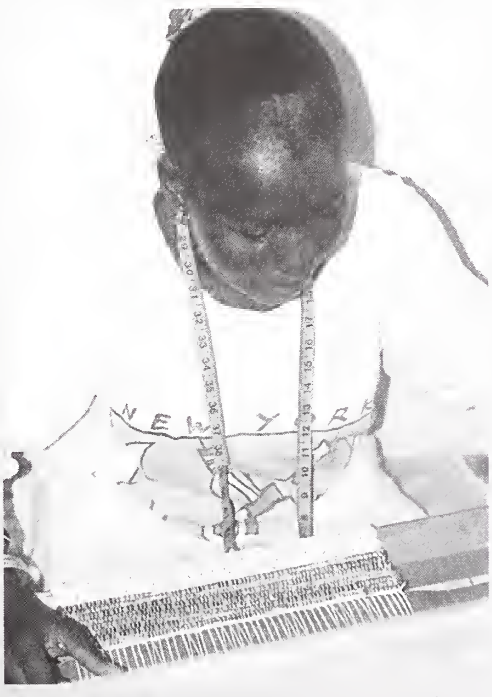
Kingston, Jamaica (MCC)—Used clothing donated to Mennonite Central Committee is being woven into jobs for five women in the ghetto here.

In a country with 25 percent unemployment, these women support themselves and their families by weaving place mats and floor mats.

The project is run by Samuel Walters, pastor of Alpine Mennonite Church here.

The women cut the clothing—MCC sent 75 bales in 1992 and 44 bales in 1993—into strips and weave the strips into a yarn warp to create the mats.

The mats, available in a jumble of colors, are sold in Jamaican stores in Kingston, Ocho Rios and Negril.



Emily Will (MCC)

Weaving jobs: *Annette Grant weaves a place mat to support her family.*

Ultra-orthodox Jewish rabbis in Jerusalem have removed Pepsi-Cola's kosher designation. The rabbis objected to Pepsi's use of scantily clad women in its ads and to Pepsi's sponsorship of a Guns 'N Roses rock concert in Tel Aviv on the Sabbath. (*Encounter*)

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In Costa Rica, Catholics and Protestants have joined forces to stop the spread of AIDS. The churches plan to promote integral sex education that will emphasize "universal human values" in schools. "This is an emergency that calls us together despite any religious or professional considerations," says Catholic priest Rodolfo Murillo. (*Latinamerica Press*)

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Church affiliation in South Africa has been in decline since 1970. The percentage of the population that regards itself Christian has dropped from 54 percent in 1970 to 38 percent in 1990. Dutch Reformed, Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic churches all report declines in membership. In contrast, Charismatic and Pentecostal churches and the African Independent Churches are growing rapidly. (*MARC newsletter*)

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Less grain, fewer fish and more people is the global prognosis of *Vital Signs: the Trends That Are Shaping Our World*, published last summer by Worldwatch Institute. The book says production of grain, meat and fish is declining, while population continues to grow. Grain output, it says, climbed 40 percent from 1950 to 1984, but fell 8 percent in the next eight years. Ocean fisheries peaked at 100 million metric tons in 1989 but have dropped 7 percent since. Meanwhile, the world's population grows by 91 million people each year. (*The Marketplace*)

The Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba will hold its annual sessions Feb. 18-19 at Steinbach (Man.) Mennonite Church.

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Fred Kaarsemaker (MCC)

A Tuareg refugee teacher prepares for class. Mennonite Central Committee pays three Tuareg teachers to teach 140 children in a northern Burkina Faso refugee camp. The Tuareg people once grazed their livestock from Mauritania to Sudan and drove camel caravans that carried gold, slaves and salt to far-flung markets. Now, as Mali's population grows, farmers—with government support—are expanding cropland into traditional Tuareg pastures. Violent clashes have ensued. Drought in the 1970s decimated Tuareg herds. Many refugees who have fled to Burkina Faso know their traditional lifestyle is threatened and hope education will equip their children for modern society.

MMA questions its fate after health-care reform

Chicago (MMA)—The proposed U.S. health-care reform plan does not have a place for Mennonite Mutual Aid, Karl Sommers told MMA's board of directors at its meeting here Dec. 3-4, 1993.

Sommers reviewed the status of health-care reform legislation in Washington and the effort to obtain an exemption which would allow MMA to continue offering health plans to members of the church.

Sommers, vice president of corporate planning, said he sees the debate over national health-care reform as being similar to the situation the church faced over the military draft just prior to World War II. "It may be that this could lead to a process of renewal in the church, just like the draft issue did," he said.

Howard Brenneman, MMA president, said, "We are very well known in Washington. We are in the right places at the right time." Brenneman said MMA is not specifically supporting or opposing any of the legislative initiatives now proposed, including the Clinton plan.

Positions: Following the board's direction from 1992, MMA has supported the concept of universal access, but Brenneman noted that all the plans introduced in Congress are based on that principle. He said the Clinton plan would serve everyone equally regardless of individual lifestyle and personal responsibility. MMA brings to the health-care discussion specific positions on healthy lifestyles and on making end-of-life decisions.

"The feedback we're getting from people in Washington is that we are making a step in the right direction," he said. "We're certainly not at the end, but we've gone a lot farther than society as a whole." Sommers pointed out that the Clinton health plan is an economic system only. "We can add a belief system," he said.

Brenneman said he is convinced there will be an astronomical bill for taxpayers with the current proposals for health-care reform. "They see it in Washington, too, but they don't want to talk about it. That's why you're seeing so much waffling going on," he said.

Brenneman also reported, "People in Washington are discovering it is not feasible to provide everything for everyone. They are excited about MMA's emphasis on issues like wellness and end-of-life decisions." Board members were polled concerning how they feel about what MMA is doing in the area of health-care reform. The large majority of board members said they approved of MMA's position not to support a specific plan. The board encouraged MMA management to emphasize values important to the church.

Bill Dunn, Sarasota, Fla., described MMA as "a small but important player in a really big ball game."

Ted Stuckey, an observer for the General Conference Mennonite Church, noted that most church members are in the dark on the details of health-care reform. He suggested the church is looking to MMA to provide leadership in this area, and appreciates the clarity that MMA can bring.

In his report to the board, Brenneman characterized MMA's role as helping move to the middle in combining theology with the practical side of life. "People need to learn how to earn, save and spend" in a church context, he said. "I'm at peace that we are doing all we can to tie the spirit and the soul with the products we're delivering in the field." *Steve Bowers*

Church heads foresee a different future

Techny, Ill. (Meetinghouse)—Mennonite and Brethren in Christ leaders grappled with the changes facing the church and global mission in the annual meeting of the Council of International Ministries here Dec. 12-16, 1993.

"The changes facing the church represent a tsunami, a 30-foot tidal wave," said theologian John E. Toews. "I suspect that the shift means that the era of Mennonite institution- and bureaucracy-building is over."

"The current change is an opportunity for transformational change," said Toews, professor of New Testament at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif. "The church is God's called-out people. The shape of how this people live together and do mission will and must change."

In his address, "Agencies and Institutions As Church," Rodney J. Sawatsky, Waterloo, Ont., said agencies and institutions will survive and prosper only as long as they are truly servants of the church.

"We are again in a time of structural transition not unlike a century ago," the president of Conrad Grebel College said. "The church as the confessing, baptizing, communing, discipling community of faith will remain. This is the essential church."

'The shape of how this called-out people live together and do mission will and must change.'

Toews

Sawatsky suggested agencies and institutions restructure to serve as ministries to and for the local and regional church.

On the second day of the consultation the group heard four case studies on constituent initiatives.

Reporting on the British Columbia Youth Project, Waldo Neufeld, Mennonite Central Committee B.C. executive director, said the voices of the next generation are calling for following a vision rather than an institution.

Phyllis Stutzman, Goshen, Ind., described the new link that has been established between her congregation, College Mennonite Church, and a repopulating rural settlement, Los Calles, in El Salvador. Through its Central America and refugee concerns committee, the congregation has been involved in Salvadoran refugee issues since 1983.

David D. Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va., president of Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions, and Gerald Martin, a pastor at Cornerstone Mennonite Fellowship—Broadway, described how the Cornerstone churches developed a mission in Albania, a ministry now administered through a congregational and conference mission board group.

Priscilla Benner, Pennsburg, Pa., told of the history and current women's grass-roots support in both North America and Honduras for the "MAMA project," promoting health and wholeness for children through national and international partnerships. MAMA stands for "Women Friends Miles Apart."

Howard Brenneman, president of Mennonite Mutual Aid Association, Goshen, Ind., spoke on improving organizational effectiveness. "I believe institutions that don't change are a thing of the past," he said.

The next annual CIM meeting is set for Dec. 11-15 in Techny, Ill. *John Bender*

Peacemakers meet virtual reality

Chicago (CPT)—A Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation entered the world of virtual reality in preparation for the Christian Peacemaker Congress held here Dec. 30, 1993, to Jan. 2.

Kathy Kelly, Gene Stoltzfus and Rey Lopez visited Battletech virtual reality center here that pits teams of players against each other over 100 miles of computer-generated desert terrain. Inside the center, eight dark gray units are equipped with overhead helmets, joy sticks, blinking lights and complex instructions viewed on a video screen.

The training video told the CPT delegates they would be entering a combat zone and firing guided missiles. There was no way out. Their only chance was to eliminate their opponents. To be combat ready they should learn how to manipulate the joystick between the weapons mode and the "mad" mode.

Jumpsuits: The employees at Battletech wore black jumpsuits with insignias and name tags. At the Battletech counter, Stoltzfus, Kelly and Lopez were each given a nickname and I.D. card, signifying a lifetime membership in Virtual World. When Sergeant Dilon, the young, pleasant woman behind the counter, asked Stoltzfus for his nickname, he said "Anabaptist Warrior." She hesitated. He offered "Peacemaker," which she understood as "piecemaker" until Stoltzfus spelled it out. Kelly chose "Gandhi" and Lopez was "Payapa," which means peace in Tagalog.

Another employee called the delegation into the pilot's bay and instructed

Two Christian Peacemaker Teams will go to Haiti this spring to do fact finding and monitor human rights. A Feb. 1-15 French-speaking team will be coordinated by John Docherty of Montreal. A March 31-April 10 English-speaking team is also being organized. People with service, mission or study experience in Haiti are encouraged to apply. The trips will cost $1,000 plus some additional transportation money. Contact John Docherty at (514) 843-4356, or CPT at (312) 455-1199.

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Salem (Ore.) Mennonite Church offered a seminary course in October and November 1993 in partnership with Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. The course, "Interpreting the Bible from an Anabaptist Perspective," was taught by Hesston (Kan.) College professor Marion G. Bontrager, during his sabbatical. Area General Conference and Mennonite Church conferences sponsored the course. "Response and attendance was beyond our dreams," says Dave Stutzman, pastor of the church.

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The Russian Orthodox Church has opened a university in Moscow. With 120 students, the school is led by former professors of Moscow State University. The Moscow Theological Seminary of Evangelical Christian Baptists opened last October with 17 students. Campus Crusade has opened two campuses of St. James Bible College in Moscow and Minsk, Belarus (with 33 and 45 students). At least 14 more Bible schools are expected to open in the CIS this year. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

The Evangelical Church of Vietnam received government permission Nov. 5, 1993, to import 5,000 Bibles. Less than 25 percent of church members in cities and about 10 percent of members in tribal areas own their own Bibles. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

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The Mennonite Camping Association will meet at Camp Amigo, Sturgis, Mich., March 21-24. The biennial convention will focus on the theme "Seeking God's Face: Forming a Theology for Mennonite Camping." Registration deadline is Feb. 28. Contact Camp Amigo at (616) 651-2811.

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A 30-year, $3 billion plan to divert Lesotho's rivers to Johannesburg, South Africa, industrial areas is under way. The plan portends severe social and economic consequences for Lesotho's rural highlands. A series of dams and tunnels there are currently under construction, says Mennonite Central Committee Lesotho worker Scott Coverdale. The water project has some benefits for Lesotho, such as new roads, better access to health facilities, new jobs and eventually water royalty payments. But Coverdale says the project is disrupting life for people in Lesotho's poor, mountain areas. "Justice cannot be measured at the bottom of a financial balance sheet," he says. Recently Coverdale and a colleague visited a region where a proposed dam will flood seven villages. About 1,400 families will lose land that some have farmed for generations. The Lesotho government has promised food, but not land, for those displaced.

them to watch a training video. Battletech's video showed a woman training rookies and delivering one-liners like, "Let's toast 'em." Then they were directed toward a "pod" with their nickname glowing in red neon. They swiveled forward, pulled a hood over their heads and, with five other competitors, began the war.

Twenty minutes later they were given their mission record, a full-sheet, single-spaced account of how often each of them were blown up or successfully "blew away" other players. Gandhi's score was minus 2,340, with one killing. An employee had visited Gandhi's pod to show her how to use the joystick and it was the employee who actually "killed" for Gandhi. "I was really shooting them, man," said an excited young boy as the competitors watched the video recording of their points. "I was killing Gandhi, and Peacemaker, too."

Indian women find place to share stories of abuse

Calcutta, India (MCC)—As Tanuja recounts how her husband and in-laws beat her and locked her in the house, she has an empathetic audience. The 30 or so women gathered here at Howrah Women's Association have all known abuse.

Abortion: Violence against women takes many forms, sometimes even before birth. Social pressure to produce a son and cheap, easily available ultrasound testing lead many families to abort female fetuses. This practice has skewed India's birth ratio; one state reports only 874 females for every 1,000 males. As girls grow up they continue to face discrimination, receiving fewer opportunities to attend school and obtain health care and less food than their brothers.

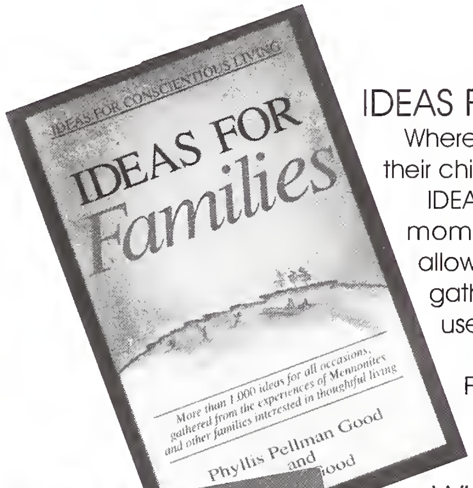
The dowry system is at the root of much violence. Although officially illegal, most brides are expected to present televisions, motorcycles, jewelry and other expensive gifts to the groom and his family. This custom perpetuates the idea that females are a liability and is a major cause of domestic violence when, as in Tanuja's case, the bride cannot deliver the goods her in-laws demand.

Howrah Women's Association, supported financially by Mennonite Central Committee since 1987, is an emotional haven for Tanuja. Here she receives support through weekly meetings and an opportunity to earn

(MCC)

Good company: *Tanuja (far left), who was beaten and locked in a closet by her husband and in-laws, shares a joke with members of Howrah Women's Association.*

Books for Families (and Parents)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IDEAS FOR FAMILIES, by Phyllis Pellman Good and Merle Good

Where do thoughtful parents turn for concrete ideas about activities to do with their children which are joyful and family building?

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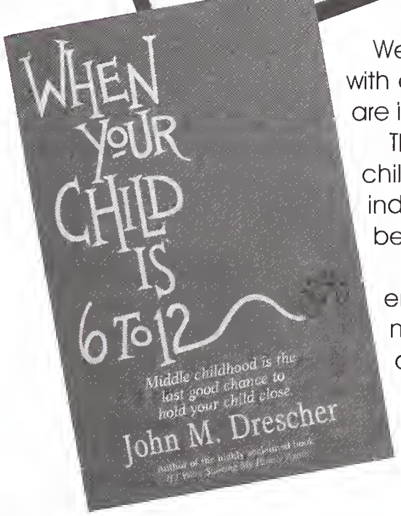
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Middle childhood is the last good chance to hold your child close.
John M. Drescher

When Your Child is 6 to 12, by John M. Drescher

We've been over-run with child-rearing manuals for infants. We've been swamped with advice for relating to teens. But little has been offered to parents whose children are in middle childhood!

These are, observes Drescher, years of primarily happy companionship between children and parents. No longer as dependent as a preschooler and not yet as independent as a teenager, the child between ages 6 and 12 is a malleable being, inclined to imitate his or her parents, looking for the safety of parental love.

The relative ease of this age may lead parents to believe that their job as parents is nearly done. Not so, asserts Drescher. "While all stages of child development are significant, middle childhood is especially crucial in the development of the inner life which prepares the child for the rest of life."

Drescher's book is a call to enjoy these years, but to not mistake their importance by neglecting the child who seems happy and content. Drescher inspires and never intimidates. He delivers his advice with compassion and care.

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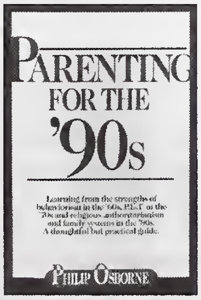
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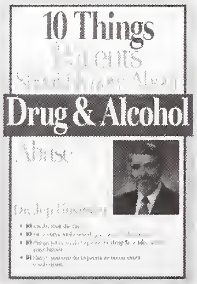
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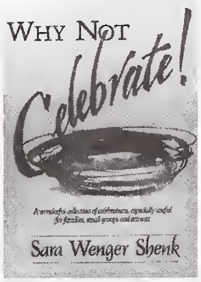
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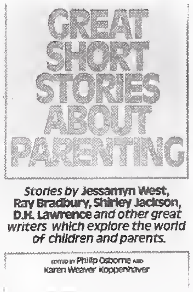
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The Christian Medical Association is recruiting physicians, dentists and nurses to respond to an invitation from the Sichuan Province in Central China. The short-term project is slated for Sept. 10-25. For information call (310) 592-3791.

* * *

Of the doctors who do abortions in the United States, 86 percent have experienced harassment by anti-abortionists or disrespect from other doctors, according to a survey in the *Medical Post*. The survey reports that 36 percent have considered quitting, and 38 percent have some moral concern about abortion. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

* * *

In only two developed countries do military expenditures exceed public expenditures for education: the United States and Israel. More than thirty-five developing countries spend more on military than education. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

* * *

Young Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip collect "martyr cards"—images of young people killed in the uprising against the Israelis, says Alain Epp Weaver, a Mennonite Central Committee teacher in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. He says boys there collect pictures of Palestinian youth killed in clashes with Israeli police and soldiers. "When young men are killed, the family often gives copies of recent pictures to mourners," he says. Some pictures are collected in albums, "creating a pantheon of Palestinian heroes. ... The curfews, the roadblocks, shooting, stone throwing and other results of occupation and resistance have created a climate where children are politically knowledgeable beyond their years," he says. "Martyr cards are one disturbing reminder of the stolen childhood of Palestinian boys and girls who have lived under occupation."

money by making dolls. No longer able to bear her husband's abuse, Tanuja has returned to her parents' house. The income she earns eases the strain this places on the family's finances.

Howrah Women's Association got its start in the 1970s when a 14-year-old maid confided to a friendly neighbor, Mrs. Grosh, that she wasn't feeling well and requested assistance to return to her home in the village. Mrs. Grosh investigated and found the girl had been driven from her in-laws' home because her parents could not provide enough dowry. She had secured a job with a wealthy family, had been raped and impregnated by her employer and forced to have an abortion.

The maid was raped and impregnated by her employer and forced to have an abortion.

Mrs. Grosh and several friends discovered the girl's plight was all too common among other domestic workers in their neighborhood, many of them illiterate teenagers from faraway villages. The women befriended several domestic workers and held reading classes for them.

This project piqued the women's interest in helping other groups of oppressed women. In 1975 they chose the name Howrah Women's Association and established an office close to the "City of Joy," a Calcutta slum made famous in North America by a book and movie set there.

"We believe that the diminishment of any woman diminishes all women," explains Mrs. Grosh.

Prostitutes' children: In the 1980s Howrah Women's Association members became increasingly concerned about the unattended children who scampered in and out of the traffic outside their office. They found many were prostitutes' children who were unable to attend school because they could not complete the form that asked for their father's name.

Howrah Women's Association organized games and other educational activities for the children. Eventually they were able to register them in formal schools. Through these activities, Howrah Women's Association members met with the children's mothers to discuss health, child development and other family issues. After gaining the women's trust, they also talked about alternatives to prostitution.

Today Howrah Women's Association offers classes in typing, food preparation and sewing for prostitutes and other women who need an income. Over the past three years, five women have left prostitution. Some now stitch garments to sell at the local market; others wind fabric strips around wire to fashion miniature dolls. Self-Help Crafts of the World shops in the United States sell these dolls; shops in Canada plan to carry the dolls in 1994.

"All the members of Howrah Women's Association have a story of struggle, and that binds them together to work toward overcoming the problems that exist in the women's world," explains Cynthia Peacock, MCC India women's development officer. She provides leadership training for the group.

Howrah Women's Association members meet weekly to share their joys and sorrows. They also celebrate each woman's birthday, an oddity in a culture where a girl's birth is usually an occasion for mourning.

"I believe that man and woman were created in the image of God and both are special in God's sight. My involvement with women's groups such as Howrah is so rewarding because I've seen the changes that come about in women's lives," says Peacock. She works with 10 other women's groups in Calcutta and in rural areas.

Howrah Women's Association is one of the organizations featured in a new MCC video, "Partners in India," now available for free loan from any MCC office. *Pearl Sensenig*

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Record

DEATHS

Chryston B. Harms, Wichita, Kan., died of cancer Dec. 18, 1993, at age 59. Harms served as pastor at Woodland Church, Warroad, Minn., and at Perryton (Texas) Church.

MINISTERS

Richard Bucher will begin as pastor at North Danvers Church, Danvers, Ill., in July.

Gladys and **Peter Buller**, Silverwood Church, Goshen, Ind., will serve a one-year pastoral-care term at Olive Mennonite Church, near Elkhart, Ind.

Norma Peters Duerksen was licensed Oct. 10, 1993, as associate pastor at Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio.

Walt Friesen has resigned as pastor at Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., effective Aug. 31.

Helen Hopson was ordained at Evanston (Ill.) Church on Oct. 10, 1993.

Peter Neufeld has resigned effective April 30 as pastor at Deer Creek (Okla.) Church.

Melvin D. Schmidt will begin as pastor at Hyattsville (Md.) Church Feb. 1.

Burton Yost is beginning as interim pastor at First Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

WORKERS

Bruce Claassen, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., has begun working at Faith and Life Bookstore, Newton, Kan.

Lowell Eastman, Comins (Mich.) Church, has begun a 10 1/2-month term in home repair with Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church.

Goering

Melvin Goering began Jan. 1 as chief executive officer of Prairie View Mental Health Center, Newton, Kan.

Don Klassen, Sermon on the Mount Church, Sioux Falls, S.D., was honored in December for completing 15 years as coordinator of the M-2 program at the South Dakota State Penitentiary.

Janine Peters, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., has begun working at Faith and Life Bookstore, Newton, Kan.

Menno-Hof is accepting applications for volunteer **host/hostess** plus light housekeeping. Married couple preferred. Must enjoy meeting new people and sharing faith with visitors. Awareness of Anabaptist history helpful. Position available April 1. Exciting ministry to thousands of visitors.

Contact **Tim Lichti, Menno-Hof, Box 701, Shipshewana, IN 46565; (219) 768-4117.**

Bluffton College seeks a faculty appointee in **English** to teach writing and literature (world literature desirable). Position begins fall 1994; Ph.D. (master's considered). Evidence or promise of teaching excellence is essential. This is a new, continuing (but at this time non-tenure track) position created to accommodate recent enrollment growth. Screening begins Feb. 15. Women and minority applicants are especially welcome.

Reply to **William J. Hawk, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817; (419) 358-3317.**

MCC British Columbia

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Reviews

BOOKS

God is here

Jesus and the Reign of God *by C.S. Song (Fortress Press, 1993, 304 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor

C.S. Song is an academic who doesn't write like one. A professor of theology and Asian cultures who teaches in both the United States and in Singapore and Hong Kong, Song sets out "to explore the contemporary meaning of God's reign."

Jesus and the Reign of God is the second book of a trilogy Song is writing. The first book, *Jesus, the Crucified People* (1989), explored the person of Jesus. The third book, *Jesus in the Power of the Spirit*, is due out this year.

Song is a pioneer of contextual theology, and the primary context he works from consists of the many dispossessed people of the world, particularly those in Asia. In this book on Jesus' message, he emphasizes the here-and-now concreteness of God's reign rather than some future "spiritual" reign. He makes use of stories and poems by Third World people to illustrate his points.

The footnotes, though not extensive, show that Song is acquainted with a variety of literature not only from the fields of theology and biblical studies but from sociology, economics, philosophy, history and fiction. Yet throughout the book he maintains an accessible style, aimed at the general reader.

Many may not like all his conclusions. For example, he writes that "a rigid formulation of truth often impoverishes truth itself." Or this: "Justice, in Jesus' view, is not the state of being righteous, a state that easily leads to self-righteousness, but the act of judging righteously, a judgment based on facts and respect for truth."

Nevertheless, Song offers wisdom that most will find valuable and stimulating. He writes, "To say that God is angry with the nations is to say that God is personally present among them and deeply involved in their life and history." One chapter, "The Culture of Empowerment," presents good insights into the nature of a subservient culture, which "can turn the oppressed into oppressors of one another." He writes about "the culture of humiliation": "It is not poverty itself but the need to depend on others that poverty creates that is detrimental to the humanity of the poor."

One of Song's emphases is the incarnation of God's reign. For example, "Sickness is an enemy of God's reign. The conquering of it has to be an essential part of the ministry of God's reign." While some may feel he goes too far and neglects Jesus' transcendance, Song challenges us to live out the way of life that Jesus taught. This book offers much to think about, much to act on.

Quick prayer tips

Rules for Prayer *by William O. Paulsell (Paulist Press, 1993, $9.95)*

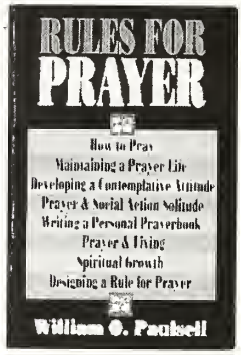
Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

What did prayer mean to Origen or to Dorothy Day, to Martin Luther or to Martin Luther King Jr.? Author William O. Paulsell undertakes an ambitious and in some ways self-defeating task: to distill the prayer lives of history's great spiritual leaders into outlined quick tips for prayer.

Paulsell distills so well the result is dry and mundane. Such suggestions as, "Upon waking, thank God for the day" (Anthony Bloom) and, "Take time for solitude" (Dietrich Bonhoeffer) are good but not revelatory.

Paulsell presents each suggestion as a starting point. The compilation of them may help the spiritual seeker who wants a sounding board for prayer life.

But if you are looking for a book that will challenge your faith in radical ways, don't look here. This is basic, building block material. And, unfortunately, basic truths don't necessarily make for exciting reading.


RULES FOR PRAYER
How to Pray
Maintaining a Prayer Life
Developing a Contemplative Attitude
Prayer & Social Action Solitude
Writing a Personal Prayerbook
Prayer & Living
Spiritual Growth
Designing a Rule for Prayer
William O. Paulsell

There are no secret tricks to potent prayer. *Rules for Prayer* doesn't presume to do the spiritual work for the reader. This is the book's strength and its flaw. In refusing to state any but the most basic and obvious of truths, the book's safety renders it insipid, leading the reader to experience the book in much the same way that Evelyn Underhill (in Paulsell's words)

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Lands of the Bible, Sept. 6-20, Ken & Kass Seitz
European Fall Harvest, Sept. 22—Oct. 6, Wilmer Martin, John Ruth

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described the experience of prayer: "In doing this we will have to resist all distractions. We will be attacked by boredom … our attention will wander. The first quarter of an hour … will be absolute warfare as we learn how little control our will has over our attention."

If you are specifically looking for some structure to help you evaluate your prayer life, you may find help here. But if you are looking for fresh spiritual insight, look elsewhere.

Natural meditation

Seeking the Wilderness: A Spiritual Journey *by Tim Lehman (Faith & Life Press, 1993, 240 pages)*

Reviewed by Terry Stutzman Mast, Arlington, Va.

Seeking the Wilderness offers a literary journey into the unpredictabilities of nature's wilder side and an attempt to clarify the links between beliefs, lifestyle and creation.

Appropriate subject matter for a Christian's attention in any age, the book has particular relevance for the many of us who have distanced ourselves from the textures, scents and wonder of the world that remains unbound by human structures.

In 12 chapters Lehman shares with us his travels in the boundary waters of northern Minnesota and southern Ontario. His observations of nature and the often precarious circumstances he finds himself in are the foundations for his theological musings and a progressive self-evaluation. Away from the stresses of his daily life, he finds himself better able to see his own existence and relationships in the context of the God-created balance of nature.

Lehman asks his reader to question the presupposition that our species is "in charge" of our own lives and of the earth's natural resources. He proposes that we see ourselves as creatures in need of relationships within the circle of all species.

Lehman's theological vocabulary carries him into intellectual realms that not all readers will want to pursue. At other times editorial oversight has allowed awkward phrasing and strained figurative language to remain in the text.

Interspersed among the outdoor stories are requests for us to follow Lehman in questioning certain accepted Christian and middle-class attributes as counter to God's intentions for a balance among his created beings. In offering sincere challenges to standard ways of thinking, Lehman on occasion begins a discussion with a generalized claim (a critique of "evangelical" Christians stands out) that leans toward stereotyping.

Resources

● ● ▼

- **Partners in India** is a new 15-minute video that relates stories of three MCC partner groups in India who have a vision for improving their communities. The video features a sports club that works on village-improvement projects such as schools and irrigation; an agency that helps low-caste villagers in South India identify and overcome obstacles on their own; and a Calcutta women's group that offers support to exploited women facing such problems as spouse abuse. For free loan contact MCC, (717) 859-1151, or MCC Canada, (204) 261-6381, or the MCC office nearest you.
- **Hunger 1994: Transforming the Politics of Hunger** (Bread for the World Institute, $12.95 U.S.) examines how to end hunger in the United States and reduce hunger worldwide. Contact Bread for the World Institute, 1100 Wayne Ave., Suite 1000, Silver Spring, MD 20910.
- **How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems** by Peter L. Steinke (Alban Institute, 1993, $14.75 U.S. plus $3.75 p/h) provides new ways for church leaders to deal with church conflict, change in the congregation and more.
- **500 Years: Martyrdom and Hope** (Latin American Council of Churches, 1993, $25.00 U.S.) is a 20-minute video on the Latin American church approaching the 21st century, focusing on the roles that Afro-Latins, Indigenous people and women have played creating a more pluralistic church. For an English version contact Ecu-Film, (800) 251-4091 in the United States, or (615) 242-6277 outside the United States.
- **Ministry and the American Legal System: A Guide for Clergy, Lay Workers and Congregations** by Richard B. Couser (Fortress Press, 1993, $35 U.S.) helps clarify such legal issues as clergy malpractice, sexual harassment, and church-related accidents.
- **Little Lamb, Who Made Thee?** by Walter Wangerin Jr. (Zondervan, 1993, two audiocassettes, $12.99 U.S.) tells stories about children and parents.

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Editorial

Bucking the system

A leper came to Jesus begging him, and kneeling he said to him, 'If you choose, you can make me clean.' Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I do choose. Be made clean!'" (Mark 1:40-41).

We have read this and similar passages from the Gospels so often that they have become passé. They seem heroic, even magical, events from the distant past. What do they possibly have to say to us today? Perhaps that Jesus was not simply treating a disease but offering healing that extended beyond the person to the entire community.

Look at the footnote in most modern Bibles after the word "leper" and you'll find an explanation something like this: "The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases." Then check a further footnote in the NRSV on the word "pity": "Other ancient authorities read *anger*."

Why is Jesus angry? Further, why is he "snorting with indignation" ("embrimesamenos") when he sends the man back to the priest after healing him (Mark 1:43-44)? In his seminal book *Binding the Strong Man* (Orbis, 1988), Ched Myers writes, "[These strong emotions] only make sense if the man had *already been to the priests*, who for some reason had rejected his petition."

The numbers of people affected by AIDS will grow, and Christians, of all people, need to be there offering solace and friendship.

Jesus not only heals the man; he wants to confront an unjust ideological system. Whatever illness this man had, much of his suffering stemmed from being an outcast, not permitted to take part in the religious life of Israel, which the priests largely controlled.

J. Pilch, to whom Myers refers, writes that in the context of the health-care system of rural Palestine during Jesus' time, healers "could only perceive illness and not diseases. ... Notice in each healing instance the almost total disregard of symptoms (something very essential to disease)." Instead people were concerned about meaning. Jesus provided social meaning for the life problems that resulted from a person's particular sickness, Pilch writes.

In the religious system of Jesus' day, illness was associated with impurity or sin, and the person was excluded from religious life. That kind of religious system made Jesus angry, and he went out of his way to confront it, whether that meant sending this man back to the priest or healing someone on the Sabbath or touching a person who was labeled unclean.

What does this have to say to us today? Modern medicine concentrates on disease, on treating symptoms. But it shies away from dealing with the social meaning of illness.

A recent study showed that people with breast cancer who had a support group survived twice as long as those without a support group. When people have others around them who accept and befriend them, their chances to experience healing increase.

'Lepers': What is the church's role in addressing the social meaning of illness. Who are the "lepers" today who have been ostracized by society? Don't people with AIDS fit this description? And isn't the church as guilty as anyone else in rejecting these people—whether they are babies or children or gay men or hemophiliacs or drug users? The rejection is often worse than the disease itself.

Hats off to people like Shirley Detwiler (see page 3), to Swamp Mennonite Church (page 5), to Kathleen Rempel Boschman (page 6) and Elizabeth Brandt (page 9), who work directly with people who have AIDS. They have not let fear or some misguided religious system keep them from touching these people.

Neither must we. The numbers of people affected by AIDS will grow, and Christians, of all people, need to be there offering solace and friendship. And any religious system that tries to ostracize people because of their illness should make us "snort with indignation." *Gordon Houser*

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Inside

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- The real thing / p. 11
- My faith at work as a parole officer / p. 12

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Welcome university students into our churches

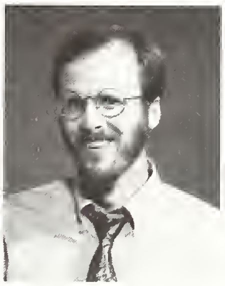
- A church away from home (see page 6)
- Be happy with those who come (see page 8)

Prologue

At the Mennonite Church Convention last August in Philadelphia, I sat with Heidi Regier Kreider during lunch one day. I asked about her work as pastor at Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Gainesville, Fla. Being in a university town, the church has a number of students come to worship. Ministering to them, Heidi said, is challenging and sometimes lonely work.

I've spoken to other pastors in university towns who have made similar comments. Reaching out to university students does not get much attention among Mennonites. It should, though, for these (among many) reasons:

- Mennonites are moving into urban areas and getting professional training at universities;
- the college years are a formative time when students often make decisions with lifelong consequences;
- colleges and universities represent a great opportunity for presenting the Good News of Jesus Christ;
- the many university students from countries around the world offer the chance to do foreign mission work right here in North America.



Read the insights (pages 3-8) from pastors who have worked with university students. These people need our support. Let them be lonely no more.

Is there a crisis in the Mennonite church, as John Esau suggests (page 9)? Tell us what you think. *gh*

Next issue: A new generation of mission workers

Cover: Photo by Eric D. Rathke, *The Newton Kansan*

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How one pastor learned to welcome university students in her congregation

How to say hello and goodbye with joy

Dorothy Nickel Friesen

It never fails. Each generation claims there is a gap. It always seems to exist in the church as well. What shall we do with our young adults? How can we communicate? Will they keep the faith? Or, as I like to say, will the faith keep them?

Congregations and church communities can be that vital link between a demanding school schedule that drains precious energy in academic rigor and an urgent yearning for connections to a spiritual home.

After living and serving in congregations where university-related individuals were involved in the church and its mission, I have observed several things.

1. Be prepared to win—and to lose.

People who are heavily into graduate school are busy but also thirsty for support. Often congregations and church communities can be that vital link between a demanding school schedule that drains precious energy in academic rigor and an urgent yearning for connections to a spiritual home.

Congregations "win" when they offer a church home to young adults. They will be blessed with the "best and the brightest." They will receive the talents (sometimes hidden for a bit) of music, dramatic arts, nurturing child care, stimulating conversation, theological inquisitiveness and budding church leadership. It is a golden moment of discovering gifts that will be used in the church setting.

But the congregations may "lose," too. Sporadic schedules, the demands of exams and dissertations, travel plans and decisions to change programs will result in irregular attendance, lack of consistency in the ongoing life of the church and sometimes irreconcilable choices of time for research and time for church. This can lead to disappointment for both the congregation and the individual.

The key is understanding that young adults, often in graduate school, are in a time of intense training that has little tolerance for divided loyalties. But for those who choose to share their lives with a local congregation, the rewards are mutual.

2. Watch for widening horizons—and for narrowing ones.

Just as the mind begins to open to new possibilities as new knowledge is learned, so do the life choices that young adults can make. Choices unheard of even a decade ago become new careers and degree tracks. As these many opportunities beckon, the world becomes a stage. Some students, for example, have never lived anywhere but home. They are exposed in this new academic context to people from other cities and other countries. They hear about different religions, see moral issues from other points of view, and they are often overwhelmed with the freedom to choose their activities. This expanding horizon is exhilarating and energizing. They find themselves and claim identities.

But for some, this seemingly endless platter of choices is too much. They are overwhelmed. They choose foolishly. They decide that being different

Ministry in the university-related congregation is an extraordinary challenge and reward.

Dave Linscheid

from Mom and Dad is better than careful thinking. They leap without looking. Sometimes they drop out of the church because that is too conservative a thing to be part of. It wouldn't be thinkable to be in a conventional church setting, especially on a Sunday morning, after being quite unconventional on Saturday night. And so the horizons narrow—and the young adult skips the spiritual diet of congregational life for the more typical peer lifestyle that has long since dropped out of church.

3. Watch for the academic giant in religious kindergarten.

One of the more fascinating discoveries I made when ministering to and with young adults was their virtual endless quest for academic rigor in their chosen discipline. Students are on the cutting edge of new research, designing new applications to ancient problems and delving into detailed analysis of documents. However, I also discovered, these same students are often not ready to subject their own faith or religious understandings to scrutiny. New ideas in religion can be threatening or seen as unnecessary. Sometimes students seek comfort from religion (not unlike the majority of Sunday morning attendees). They simply want to be reassured about the basics of their faith and not worry about thorny ethical dilemmas or church politics at the summer conference. Tradition is important—but only at church.

Gently leading young adults along the path of faith is rewarding, but it must be done carefully and prayerfully. The life cycle of testing and searching often occurs at this same time of being in a university-related congregation. Walking along with them is rewarding even if exasperating. The possibilities of engaging these individuals in a deepening spiritual vision are endless. Most are grateful that you are there to try the new, challenge the traditional and open doors to new thinking. But don't be shocked by the ones who say, "I want church to be a place of rest—not thinking."

4. Be prepared to walk on holy ground—and in the depths of hell.

One of the greatest joys for me as pastor, especially in a university-related congregation, was the chance to participate in the life choices of many individuals. This involved vocational decisions, choosing marriage partners, birthing first babies, deciding on baptism and making major independent life choices. The joy of baptizing a new Christian who could say to me, "Dorothy, that Jesus was a radical. He turned the world upside-down. I want to follow him," was truly breathtaking. The joy of doing premarital counseling with couples making lifelong commitments was there. The dedication of a new child with admiring parents amid a supportive congregation was a holy moment. The ability of charter congregational members to welcome the new student, the new resident, the international visitor over and over again, was inspiring. To mark the major life directions in the context of the church was truly a sacred trust.

However, there were the agonies of decisions that forced painful choices. I was there to witness the roommates who turned into stiff competitors for scholarships. I saw the grief of losing a first grandparent to death and being unable to attend the funeral because it

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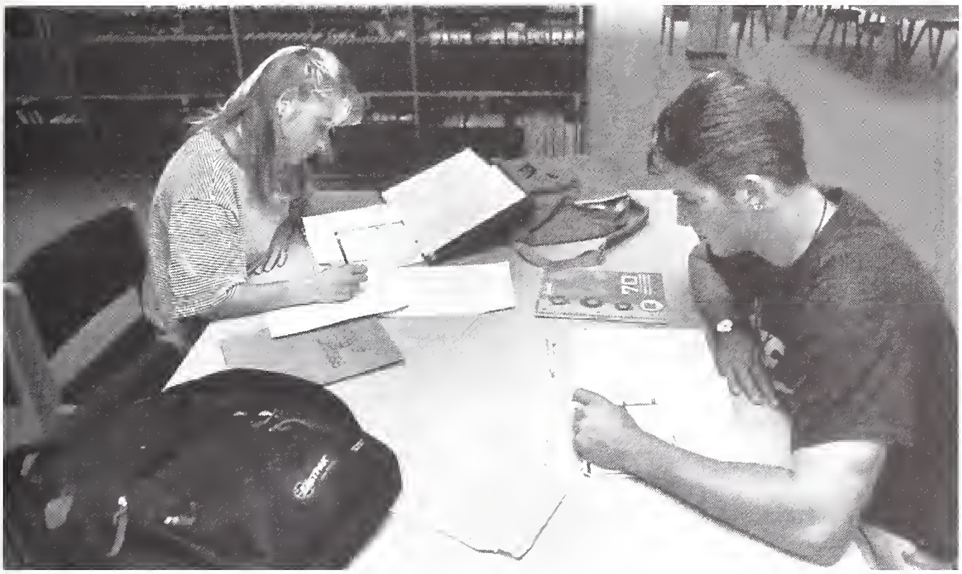
To include service to others as part of their vocational and academic preparation is part of the church's challenge to young adults.



Vada Snider

Students are on the cutting edge of new research, but new ideas in religion can be threatening or seen as unnecessary.

conflicted with the only exam for a class. I heard the depression that turned so deep that suicide seemed the only choice. I listened to the stories of injury and abuse that many had suffered in their homes and families. The depths of hell are part of the pastoring and congregational ministry when relating to young adults.

5. Remember that your future pastor or conference executive or church planter may be sitting in the back row this next Sunday.

The opportunity for the university-related congregation to mentor new leaders for church ministry is never-ending. Eager minds plus idealism equal opportunities for the seeds of ministry to be planted.

I was often the one who asked questions: What is in your future? Have you ever considered voluntary service? Would you like to see the world and serve humanity at the same time? Can you invent a machine that will aid the farmers of the world? Are you able to design a building that can meet the needs of the aging? Will you find the chemical equation that will cure cancer? These and other questions are not academic when you minister to young adults. These students are wrestling with life's largest problems. And they just may find the solutions.

To include service to others as part of their vocational and academic preparation is part of the church's challenge to young adults. Getting involved in a congregation that keeps the inward and outward components of the gospel ever present challenges these participants to use their skills in the service of the church. What a privilege!

6. Learn to say hello and goodbye with grace.

The most enjoyable part of ministry in a university-related congregation is the multitude of hellos. Every September a new church is planted. Who will be there? What new faces will appear? Will last year's faithful show up? And they come—eager yet anxious, conservative and liberal, Mennonite and "other than Mennonite," young and slightly older, mostly on borrowed money, casual and generally looking for a friend. They offer to teach Sunday school, serve on the worship committee, staff the nursery, sing a solo, play the piano or guitar or drums, fix your car, bake bread and interrupt your day with a friendly, "Are you busy?" And based on who shows up, that's church for that year.

But there are the inevitable goodbyes. No program lasts forever. People graduate, find jobs and move away. Those are the expected partings. Worse, they fail exams, have dissertations rejected, get fired or downsized and must leave. Those are awkward and wrenching partings. When you have invested in these lives and given even a few minutes in a special way, it is hard to say goodbye.

Learning to walk alongside these students, faculty and staff members is a lesson in grace and humility. Unpredictability and change are constant. The ministry of hospitality, of welcoming, of opening the heart and soul to new people in the community in the church is of absolute necessity to minister in this situation. Learning to say goodbye with tears and aching heart is also a discipline. Sending and commissioning people to the next stop in their life journey are equally satisfying and necessary in the life of the church.

Ministry in the university-related congregation is an extraordinary challenge and reward. Knowing that God is there, preparing women and men to learn and serve, is a source of comfort and challenge as we face the future.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen served pastorates in Kansas City, Kan., and Manhattan, Kan. She now serves as assistant dean at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

A church away from home

This Florida congregation includes students from around the world or close by.

Heidi Regier Kreider

Cheng-Feng Huang had never heard of Mennonites before he was invited by a friend to student activities at Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Gainesville, Fla. But as an international graduate student at the University of Florida, he appreciated the warm acceptance he felt and the chance to meet Americans and practice his English. Now, two years later, seven more Taiwanese students relate to our congregation at Cheng-Feng's invitation, taking part in worship, a Bible study class and fellowship groups.

Jan and Peter Shetler attended a Mennonite college and worked for Mennonite Central Committee in Africa before coming to Gainesville for graduate school. Although the Shetlers and their two boys are here for only three years, they are active members at Emmanuel and spread the word about the church to others who live in university family housing.

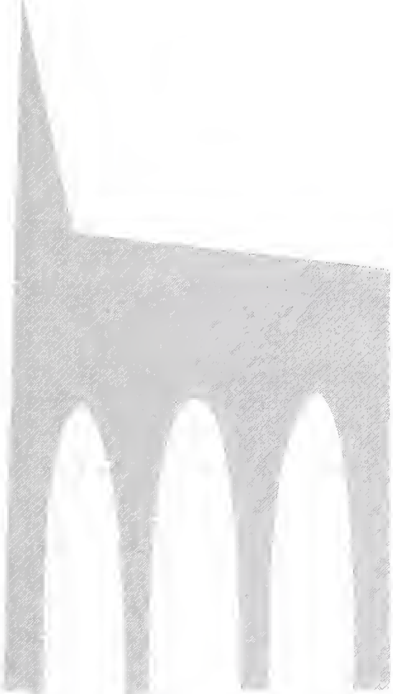
Cheng-Feng, Peter and Jan are part of a diverse group of students at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, which meets on the edge of the University of Florida campus. Graduate students and their families make up half our congregation. Their presence brings unique challenges and opportunities as we address the particular needs that students encounter:

- Most students are away from home. The church is like a family to them, but during vacation times our sanctuary is emptier as students return to visit relatives.
- Students are under the stress of financial debt, pressure to succeed and vocational decisions.
- For married students with children, family roles and responsibilities must be balanced with the demands of academic goals and deadlines.
- Students struggle to integrate a commitment to faith, service and Christian community with the academic values of scientific analysis, rational thought and academic competition.

Student ministry also brings challenges to the congregation:

- We expend considerable energy saying hello and goodbye to students. Some stay, but most move on to jobs or service assignments elsewhere.

A commitment to faith: *Heidi Regier Kreider with graduate student Cheryl Shigaki at Cheryl's outdoor baptism service.*



Congregational student ministry is essential for the students of today to be active church members tomorrow.

The church is like a family: *Emmanuel Mennonite Church gathers for a potluck picnic.*

- Students are inquisitive and sometimes critical of religious faith and Christian institutions, urging us to grapple with various issues.
- Students are rich in skills, experience and ideas but are limited in their resources of time, money and long-term commitment.
- The university setting tends to have an intellectual emphasis that can seem elitist and exclusive to those from the local community who do not pursue higher education.
- Students represent diversity: They are young and old, international and North American, single and married, some with families; they come from a wide variety of religious backgrounds. No one program of "student ministry" is right for all of them.

In spite of these challenges we continue to embrace ministry to students as a priority. We believe the church is a source of support and guidance at a crucial time in students' lives, as they make important decisions and experience major transitions. Our congregation is a link to Mennonite service and mission agencies, when students come from or go on to a term of service. Mennonite students find here a church away from home in which to practice their faith amid academic learning. Congregational student ministry is essential for the students of today to be active church members tomorrow. And those from other religious backgrounds often are drawn to the Mennonite church because of our peace witness, opportunities for service and sense of community amid an individualistic and competitive environment.

At Emmanuel Church we incorporate students into every level of worship and congregational life, even though their time here may be short. Our hope is that the wider Mennonite church will also support student ministry through prayer and by helping make contact between congregations and students in university settings.

Heidi Regier Kreider is pastor at Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Gainesville, Fla.

Be happy with those who come

Working with students requires patience, but this crucial ministry is worth the effort.

Steve Ratzlaff

The flyers were all sent out. All the local Mennonite college students had been invited to participate in the next Sunday evening gathering. The bottom of the flyer had included a short form to fill out and return, stating whether they would be in attendance (a preaddressed, stamped envelope was also included). We had to get some idea of how much food to amass for this event. We received 17 replies, with 15 saying they would be there. Some said they would be bringing a friend, so we planned for around 20. Five came.

The above example is not an unusual one for those of us who work with college students. Students have so many tugs and pulls in their lives that it is hard for them to commit themselves. Something often comes up that changes their plans. It might be a trip home, a spur of the moment pizza party with friends, a beautiful sunshiny day, a test the next day, or a chance meeting with the man or woman of their dreams. Whatever it is, it changes their schedule. Consequently it becomes important for campus workers to be flexible, to be content to relate to those who come without laying a guilt trip on those who don't.

Campus workers must be flexible and content to relate to those who come without laying a guilt trip on those who don't.

Beginning students come to colleges and universities with differing abilities to handle the changes that have happened to them in the last few months of their lives. Three months earlier they graduated from high school. By the opening day of classes at the university their whole lives have undergone rapid change. They have left the security of their communities and homes and have plunged into a world of new friends and new living situations (with roommates they may or may not get along with). They have choices to make that weren't there a few short months ago. They must decide whether or not to go to class, to drink with their friends, to walk around campus after dark. They must choose a major, pay for their schooling and other bills, adjust to a diverse student body.

Foreign culture: Faith choices also arise: Do I really believe what I was taught in church? How do I deal with the different religions I run into at school? What does God really say about sexuality? Some students make these choices and adjustments better than others. Some are able to jump into this new, foreign culture and thrive. Others, who might have been "big fish in a little pond" in their home community, find out that being a "little fish in a big pond" at the university is difficult, even painful.

Students need safe environments where they may ask questions that often don't have easy answers, questions they couldn't ask their peers or their parents. They need people who can help them work their way through the crises they face, whether personal or social or mental. They need fellowship with people of like mind and religion in order to remain strong in their faith. This is what campus ministries try to do—provide settings where students can find continuity and safety in dealing with the issues they have to face.

Campus workers need to be flexible, open to change and able to listen. They must be happy working with those who come rather than expect large numbers. They must enjoy the stimulation and challenge that comes from the questions students ask. And they must be willing to be on call 24 hours a day, for students often need immediate help.

There are few times in life when people encounter so much change and make so many important decisions as they do when they enter college. Consequently there is no time when it is more necessary to have individuals available to help students with these changes and decisions. That is the nature and call of campus ministry. Students need us to be there.

Steve Ratzlaff is pastor of First Mennonite Church in Lincoln, Neb.

Speaking out

Crisis in the Mennonite church

The new year brings a gloomy outlook.

John Esau

"Quo vadis?" These words from the title of a novel by Henryk Sienkiewicz ask the question that's going through my mind as we enter the new year.

The words ask, Where are you going? Where is the Mennonite church going in 1994?

I ask that question because I've felt a sense of gloom in the last months.

I am not unhappy about my local congregation. Quite the opposite. On a recent Sunday, for instance, the youth of the congregation led us in worship, reminding us of their talents and willingness to be a part of the church. And our Sunday school class demonstrated an unusual commitment to stay focused on the biblical text. It was an inspiring morning. Sunday mornings usually are.

Many good things are happening in our congregations. Each of us could tell of the activity of God's Spirit in the church today. We ought to be grateful.

But alongside these examples of grace, evidence grows that all is not well. It's the big picture that concerns me about the future of the Mennonite church in North America.

Until recently it appeared that our supply of pastoral candidates was about equal to the number of congregations seeking pastors. That appears to be changing.

Today the General Conference Mennonite Church has its highest number of pastoral openings in the past nine years.

Even more troubling is our apparent inability to find pastors willing to serve our largest congregations. In the United States, seven of the 10 largest GC congregations are looking for lead pastors, and two of the other three are looking for associate pastors.

Adding to my gloom are major pastoral/congregational conflicts and crises. Sometimes I feel like Job receiving messages of one tragic situation after another. This is not what God wants in the church, especially in a church that supposedly puts high value on peace and reconciliation.

Sexual abuse: Then there is the continuing issue of sexual abuse and misconduct, which has had a demoralizing effect on pastors and congregations, even on those not directly involved. Rumors and new allegations continue. We must and will continue to respond, but there is no joy in what must be done.

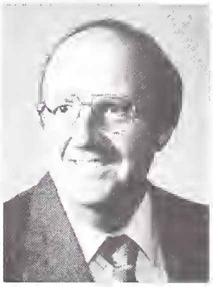
Financial crises seem to be everywhere. The continuing downward spiral of giving to conference and denominational ministries works its way into the morale of all of us.

Is there any optimism about the future of these levels of the church? Or don't they matter? Where is the leadership capable of offering new direction?

Possible integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church has stimulated considerable energy and imaginative discussion over the last decade or so. That, too, has fallen on hard times. Does anyone else hear the words of caution and "go slow" as evidence of a failure of nerve? My sense is that both conferences are going about their business as though integration will not happen. Meanwhile it *is* happening and *has* happened in several area conferences and the many dual-affiliated congregations.

Most of the time I think of myself as a hopeful, optimistic person, as a person of faith. But we are also called to be realistic and truthful.

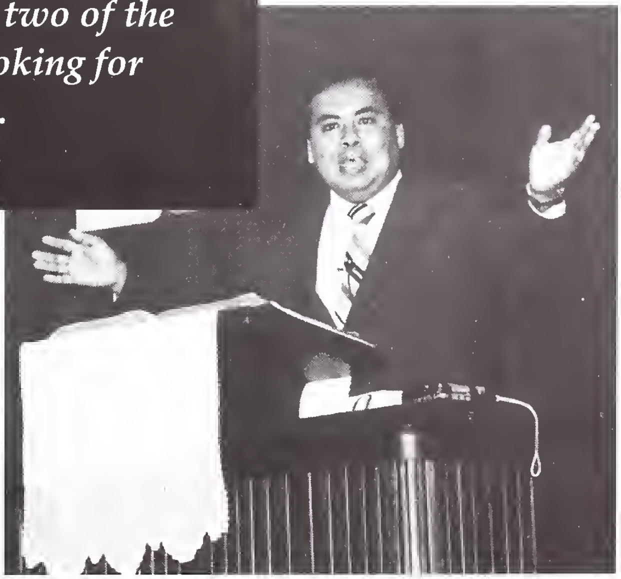
As I see it, the evidence is mounting that the Mennonite church in North America is headed toward a crisis. It is not the crisis of persecution that shaped us in the 16th century. This time the crisis is from within and of our own making.



John Esau is director of Ministerial Leadership Services for the General Conference Mennonite Church. This article was reprinted with permission from Mennonite Weekly Review.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite.*

Seven of the 10 largest GC congregations are looking for lead pastors, and two of the other three are looking for associate pastors.



The way of the cross

The world's view of power is the greatest danger to the church

Ashish Chrispal

"When the missionaries came we had the land and they had the Bible," the South African proverb says. "They asked us to close our eyes and pray. When we said 'Amen,' and opened our eyes, they had the land and we had the Bible."

Proclaiming the Good News, in the early history of missionary work, happened in the context of colonial rule. For many nations, sadly, the gospel came as a package deal along with losing their freedom. The proclamation was seen as a "power encounter" of the powerful with the less powerful.

However, in more tribal and popular religious contexts, the term "power encounter" meant exorcisms. It was the power of Jesus Christ and the gospel that brought freedom to those under the clutches of Satan.

The time has come for the church to regain its identity as the communicator of the Good News, not in its power or the power of Western money but in its powerlessness, allowing God to act through its life. This is a difficult, ongoing problem, but it is the only way appropriate to the community that proclaims the crucified and risen Lord as its master and leader.

Duane Friesen defines power positively in *Essays on Peace Theology and Witness* when he says, "Power is the creative and positive force which defines our humanity as made in the image of God. From God we receive our power of being, which is a creative power to be co-creators with God."

On the other hand, many people understand power as "a complete control" or "authority." At the risk of oversimplification I would say that power is a reality over someone or something: human beings over other human beings, strong over weak, ownership of land and resources, politicians over other people.

This is true in religious encounters also. The world's understanding of power is the biggest temptation and danger that threatens the church's nature and task.

The way of the cross was the hardest thing for the first disciples to understand. It was at Caesarea Philippi that Peter answered correctly who Jesus was. But when Jesus reminded the disciples that they must be representatives of "agape" in a hostile and sinful world, the problem of understanding emerged.

The way of the cross: For Jesus this means that when love meets sin, love gets hurt. When Peter vows to protect Jesus with violence, Jesus rebukes him. Our way is often the way of violence, of show of power, but God's way is the way of the cross.

Jesus is saying that when we act from the standpoint of power and dominance, from control and violence, then God cannot become present in the world. God becomes visible through those who put on the character of God, embodying the sacrificial love, compassion and forgiveness of God. This is costly in the presence of sin and evil, yet it is the only hope of radically undermining the destructive power of evil.

I suggest that the church learn the spirituality of risk by resisting the idolatry of power and wealth.

The struggle to understand the Christian identity of powerlessness continued in the early church. Paul had to remind the Corinthians about the source and reality of their power. Paul broadly divided humanity into two groups: those who want God to be proved through miraculous signs—all powerful, omnipotent God—and those who wanted God to be all-wise, omniscient. However, both wanted God in terms of their best interests—power on *our* behalf, wisdom like *ours*. For both, the ultimate idolatry is that of insisting that God conform to their own prior views.

God's curse: The cross is central in Paul's writings. Paul points out repeatedly that "cross" is a folly. People understood Messiah to mean power, splendor, triumph, while crucifixion meant weakness, humiliation, defeat. Hence both Jews and Greeks were scandalized by the Christian message. For the Jews Jesus Christ was unacceptable as God's chosen one because he hung on a tree and so was under God's curse. For the Greeks it was utter foolishness. But it is precisely the depth of this scandal and folly that we must appreciate and incorporate.

The church is tempted to gain socioeconomic and political power and dreams of a new Christendom, forgetting that its own life portrays oppressive and exploitative power at various levels. The church needs to live by the cross and manifest the fruits of the kingdom in its fellowship. The church is called to continue the life of the crucified Lord through a sacrificial lifestyle.

I suggest that the church learn the spirituality of risk by resisting the idolatry of power and wealth. Let us stand in solidarity with all the marginalized and oppressed in their struggle for humanity and lives of justice and shalom. Let us give up communal self-interest and closed identity for a fellowship in Christ that transcends race, class and cast. This will mean that the church will seek to live spiritually in the midst of the world under the shadow of the cross following its master on the way of the cross—the only way to shalom, justice and freedom.

Ashish Chrispal was visiting professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in spring 1993. He is dean and professor at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India, and pastor of St. Peter's Church, Panchgani, Maharashtra.

A way home

Sara Wenger Shenk is author of Coming Home *(Good Books, 1992) and lives in Harrisonburg, Va.*

The real thing

What does it mean to live with integrity?

Sara Wenger Shenk

A word and its embodied reality that has given me much food for thought in recent days is *integrity*. I have developed an intuitive gauge that gives me a reading on each person's integrity quotient. My gauge isn't entirely reliable; it requires intense listening with an internal ear for the truth of each individual and situation I encounter.

Silent but probing questions vie for attention. Is this person for real? Despite what he says, what matters most to him? Is she following an unconscious script set by early family dynamics? What ideological fuel is powering his engine? Is her spirituality a sham or does it have integrity with who she is at the core? Is his behavior fundamentally selfish or fueled by genuine love?

I find with questions of integrity that it's not only either you have it or you don't but that there are many shades in between. In fact, it is the ambiguity of the gray areas that causes us to lose sight of the genuine article that shines like the sun when we encounter it for real.

Our family recently watched the movie *Leap of Faith*. We were pleasantly surprised with the complexity of its character development and its refusal to resort to caricatures. It tells the story of a revival preacher who is essentially a con artist. He argues that what he gives the gullible crowd with his glittering, hyped-up show makes them feel good and, like heaven, *is* working wonders, even though, as he admits on the side, "nobody up there is going to do it for you, that's for sure." When one young crippled lad with sincere faith is genuinely healed, the preacher is confounded and angry that someone pulled off a better act than his own. Frightened by the authenticity of the miracle, he decides to leave his "circus" behind and flee alone from the town. But before he does, the young, adoring lad comes to ask "the Rev" if he can join him on his healing tour.

"I had nothing to do with you walking," the reverend admits.

"Sure you did. Everybody saw it," the boy says.

"Listen kid," the reverend says, "I run a show here. It's a lot of smoke and noise and it's strictly for the suckers. I've been pulling one kind of scam or another since I was your age. And if there's one thing I know, it's how to spot the genuine article, because that's what you gotta watch out for. Not the cops. You can always get around the cops. But the one thing you can never *ever* get around is the genuine article, and *you*, kid, are the genuine article."

"Are you saying you think you're a fake?"

"I *know* I'm a fake."

"What difference does it make if you get the job done?"

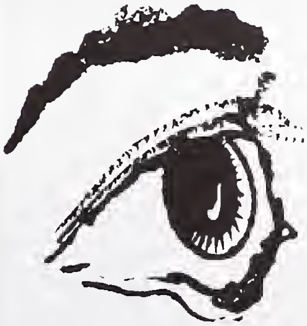
"Kid, it makes all the difference in the world."

Am I a person of integrity? It's a question I often try to discern prayerfully. When I encounter people of integrity, I see most starkly how I have compromised. Somehow we know the genuine article when we see it and then know too how muddled our own vision and behavior have become.

Backed against the wall: I find that my children, more than anyone, keep me keenly tuned to what it means to live with integrity. In ethical dilemmas the questions are often raised—what would you do in a crisis or if no one was watching or if your back were against the wall? In a sense, our children always have us backed against the wall.

My children see me up front preaching on a Sunday morning. But they also see me grouchy in the morning and flaring in anger when pushed too far. They see how I spend my money and what I say about people behind their backs. They know how I pray and what significance I do or don't ascribe to prayer. If I am a genuine article they will have confidence that the way I've chosen to walk can be trusted to serve them well, too. If they see too many inconsistencies and can't find a common thread of integrity, they'll look for another way—or else learn to fake it along with me.

Many of our children have left the faith because they heard us mouthing platitudes without living as though life and faith had any genuine relationship. It's a tricky business—being real people who have an honest, unsweetened faith that impacts the way we live our everyday lives. Most of us recognize the genuine article when we see it. Our children will only be persuaded if and when they are fortunate enough to see the real thing.



Many of our children have left the faith because they heard us mouthing platitudes without living as though life and faith had any genuine relationship.

God has no favorite people

Faith at work as a parole officer

Abe Penner

I work as a parole officer. My job includes the supervision of parolees who have been granted the privilege of serving part of their sentence in the community.

They report to me at the office, I see them at work and in their homes. I write reports and make decisions about their freedom.

My faith challenges me to Christian humility. While humility is desirable in everyone, it is particularly desirable in those who make a living trying to help others. This is especially true when the helper is in a position of authority and the one being helped is an unwilling client.

What I mean by humility is being aware that I as an individual and the correctional service of Canada are fallible.

Christian humility also means that I allow myself to become vulnerable and to be taught by my clients; that I value them as being just as important as I am; that I recognize that they, in spite of what they have done, are God's image bearers.

They have feelings, desires and aspirations. My challenge as a Christian is to recognize that God has no favorite people.

Christian faith calls me to believe that, by the grace of God, individuals are able to change and that they are worth the work it takes to help them change. It also means that I am not going to give up on them when they continue on the wrong road.

When individuals and families experience forgiveness, healing and growth, Christian humility recognizes that it is God who empowers people to heal, to forgive and to love.

My Christian faith also challenges me not to become too comfortable with the one who pays me. Having read the minutes of regional and national committee meetings and from personal experience, it is clear that I work within a system that is more concerned about institutional order and security than with rehabilitative programs.

It is quick to label and predict how an individual will act in the future. From the day of conviction, the prisoner is classified, assessed and monitored. The monitoring continues when a prisoner is paroled.

Thirst for vengeance: Much of this work is needed and valuable. Too often, however, its practice has been guided more by society's fear of financial loss, personal victimization and thirst for vengeance than by its compassion for the underprivileged and the personal trauma suffered, mostly by children, women and the elderly.

Aiden Schlichting Enns

'It is God who empowers people to love': *Abe Penner*

> My Christian faith calls for courage and faithfulness to work in a messy, complicated world.

Much work is aimed at preventing bad press and embarrassment in the House of Commons. When something goes wrong, the system is more concerned that officers and their support staff can demonstrate that they met policy requirements than that they worked effectively with an offender.

Christian faith calls me to sensitivity and hope in a work place where many people have become cynical and hard-nosed. I too feel this temptation. I feel it when I read a particularly notorious police report. I feel it when I read of past failures of individuals on parole.

Christian faith calls for more than professionalism and objectivity. It calls me to participate in the agony of the victims and the guilt of the perpetrator. My faith calls me to seek the face of Jesus and to offer that cup of cold water.

A continual temptation is to blame the bureaucracy for all that is wrong in our society. My Christian faith calls for courage and faithfulness to work in a messy, complicated world.

I look to the faith community to help me maintain a healthy critique of the principalities and powers. Through corporate worship I seek inspiration and encouragement for my work.

My clients have names. They have feelings. Most of them have addresses and families. They live in the same world as I do. As children, most of them have been victimized and brutalized by some adult and often by our country's bureaucracy.

Most of them have not enjoyed the same opportunities I have enjoyed. They must be held accountable, but my faith challenges me to help them find their dignity, to value themselves, take responsibility for themselves and to make a positive contribution to our world.

Abe Penner is a member of Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg. This article is adapted from a presentation at his church and is reprinted with permission from Mennonite Reporter.

Doors open, churches growing in Cuba

Akron, Pa. (MCC/MBM/FMC)—As political and economic pressures constrict Cuba, government restrictions are loosening, and the Mennonite church there is growing.

Easing constraints have also opened doors for Mennonites from other countries to lend a hand.

A delegation of Mennonites from Mexico, Canada and the United States has endorsed supporting a pastoral couple to nurture the Mennonites in the Las Villas province of Cuba. The team visited Cuba Nov. 24 to Dec. 1, 1993.

This marks the first project of financial assistance to the island nation by North American Mennonites in over 30 years, although visiting delegations and guest professors have gone to Cuba since Franconia Mennonite Conference missionaries left in 1961.

Delegation member Linda Shelly says a combination of events, including the acceptance of the U.S. dollar and the legalization of purchasing private land, has made it easier for Mennonites from North America to work with the Cuban churches. Shelly is secretary for Latin America for Mennonite Central Committee.

"It was possible earlier, but logistics would have been more difficult," she says.

She says the new Cuban openness has freed up the local Cuban church as well. While a core group of Mennonites have held to their beliefs since the 1950s, only recently have they begun to attract new people. In the last two years the number of Mennonite house churches has jumped from three to nine.

Of the Lord: Cuban Mennonite Ramiro Guerra, 72, told the delegation, "We went through a time in which we couldn't say we were of the Lord. But the Lord has changed that. We pray not only for ourselves but for everyone. We're inviting everyone to our meetings."

The delegation included members from the Mennonite church in Mexico, Franconia Mennonite Conference, MCC and Mennonite Board of Missions.

The four groups will help support Cuban pastoral couple Inéz and Roberto Rodríguez by providing transportation so that they may visit the nine Mennonite groups scattered throughout Las Villas province. The Rodríguezes have provided informal leadership to the Mennonite house churches in Cuba since the late 1970s.

Paying for transportation may seem minimal in North America, but from a Cuban perspective it makes all the difference.

"Because of the deteriorating economic situation, the Cuban people are receiving extremely small salaries," says Shelly. "The average Cuban salary equals $2.50 U.S./$3.34 Cdn. per month, and a liter of gasoline costs $0.93 U.S./$1.24 Cdn."

"While outside groups help with transportation, Cuban Mennonites will assist the Rodríguez family with food and household expenses. The churches anticipate being self-

Linda Shelly (MCC)

Reunited: *Allan Yoder, right, is reunited with Cuban Mennonites Blanca Martínez and Ester and Ramiro Guerra, who knew him as a child. Son of missionaries Henry and Mildred Yoder, Allan lived in Cuba until age 9; this was his first time back. Yoder now works for Mennonite Board of Missions.*

Inside the news

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Children watching Saturday morning cartoons see violence every 47 seconds. Viewers of prime-time network and cable programming see violence more than every six minutes, according to a study by Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Sandee Zerger, director of the Center for Academic Development at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., presented a training symposium on Supplemental Instruction (SI) Dec. 12-15, 1993, in Chicago. Zerger is one of 11 certified trainers in SI worldwide. SI is an interactive academic support service attached to challenging college courses. Participants from 11 colleges and universities attended the workshop.

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The Bluffton (Ohio) College art department has received a new printing press, a gift from alumna Grace Albrecht, Tallahassee, Fla. The large, 48-by-70-inch Charles Brand etching press will make the college's studio "one of the finer print studios around," according to art department chair Jaye Bumbaugh.

The Protestant and Evangelical churches in Chile that grew rapidly under the Pinochet dictatorship are bidding for full legal recognition under the elected government. Roman Catholicism in that country continues to enjoy a wide variety of privileges denied other denominations. Non-Catholic Christian denominations account for 16 percent of the population, putting Chile second to Guatemala in the proportion of Evangelicals to Catholics. (*Latinamerica Press*)

• • •

Public confidence levels in the United States have shifted between 1991 and 1993. General Social Surveys from the Roper Center, based in Chicago, monitor public confidence levels. When asked whether they have a "great deal of confidence" in something, people responded with these ups and downs of confidence: banks, up 2.7 percent; major companies, up 0.6 percent; medicine, down 8.5 percent; military, down 18.1 percent, and organized religion, down 14.2 percent. (*Context*)

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Evangelicals make up more than 10 percent of the population in at least 10 Latin American countries. Guatemala is the leader with 38 percent. In 1900 the Evangelical population in Latin America was estimated at 50,000. By 1990 it had grown to an estimated 40 million. A study by International Urban Associates, an Evangelical missionary agency based in the United States, predicts that by the year 2000, Evangelicals in Latin America will exceed 100 million. While the majority of Evangelical churches in Latin America come from conservative and fundamentalist traditions, many are becoming increasingly involved in the social and political life of their communities. (*Latinamerica Press*)

supporting in the future," Shelly says.

In addition to transportation aid, the four organizations will also assist with exchanges among Cuban and other Latin American Mennonites to learn from one another. "Cuban Mennonites prefer this kind of experiential exchange to the placement of long-term workers in Cuba," Shelly says.

"This is an opportune time," said Jorge Rodríguez, a Mennonite pastor from Mexico. "If we do not take advantage of this moment, we may not have another."

MCC also plans to provide materials prepared in Spanish by the Central American Anabaptist seminary, SEMILLA.

Mennonite ministry in Cuba began in 1954, when Franconia Mennonite Conference sent two families—Henry and Mildred Yoder and Aaron and Betty King—to establish churches in the Las Villas province. They, along with other North American missionaries, left in 1961 due to the U.S.-led economic blockade of Cuba. *Based on a report by Emily Will*

Mennos testify before Congress on Zaire

Washington (AIMM)—Two Mennonites were part of a 20-person delegation that was invited to meet with U.S. government officials on Jan. 5 to discuss the deteriorating situation in Zaire. The delegation consisted primarily of representatives of church agencies.

Jennifer Ward, senior director for African affairs at the National Security Council, called the meeting to find out what private agencies are doing in Zaire, what constraints they face and what resources might enhance their work.

Rick Derksen of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Keith Gingerich of Mennonite Central Committee and others told officials that although humanitarian aid helps the Zairian people, it cannot take the place of a political solution. And no political solution in Zaire is possible as long as President Mobutu remains in power, they said.

Since seizing power in 1965, President Mobutu's government, supported by the United States for many years, has mismanaged Zaire's natural resources and driven the country into bankruptcy, they said. The price of food and other basics has soared beyond the reach of much of the population.

Obstacles: Derksen and Gingerich reported obstacles AIMM and MCC face as they try to work in Zaire: harassment by security forces, general lawlessness and problems with communication, obstacles that the Zairian people confront daily.

They suggested concrete actions the international community could take: freezing Mobutu's assets (estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars) and enacting diplomatic sanctions and an arms embargo.

Derksen, who has served in Zaire since 1977 and is currently in Canada on a one-year North America Assignment, recounted advice his children gave him prior to the meeting. "Tell them to stop helping Mobutu and start helping all the kids in Zaire," said his 8-year-old son Jeremiah. "And the adults too," added his 11-year-old daughter Karina.

Los Angeles churches respond to quake

Newton, Kan.—Mennonites have rallied to help victims of the earthquake that struck the Los Angeles area in the early morning hours of Jan. 17.

The Hispanic Mennonite Brethren church Iglesia Evangelica Bethel in North Hollywood was hardest hit by the quake. Members of the church camped outside several days following the quake, as tremors continued. The church's pastor, Eliseo Franco, says he spent the nights following the quake sleeping in his car.

In the days following the quake, members of the Council of Anabaptists in Los Angeles (CALA) brought in staples to the campers: initially water, then also charcoal and food staples.

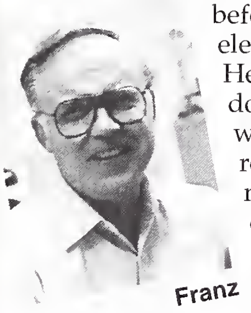
Mennonite Disaster Service arrived Jan. 18 to set up headquarters in the Iglesia Evangelica Bethel building. Short- and long-term projects are being planned.

"The whole fabric of life, everything you're used to comes apart at a time like this," said Tim Cooper, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Upland, Calif., just days after the quake. Cooper helped facilitate CALA's work.

Quake shakes conference worker

Newton, Kan.—General Conference planned giving director Gary Franz was asleep in a Los Angeles-area hotel when the earthquake hit at 4:31 a.m. on Jan. 17.

A loud rattling woke him, the sound of the dresser drawers banging. Groggy, Franz turned on the room's two light switches several times before realizing the electricity was out. He started for the door, but part way out he realized he was not completely dressed, and he hurried back to grab some clothes.



Franz

Every time Franz tried to re-enter the building, it began to shake, he says. He drove to the airport and rescheduled an earlier flight home. During a layover in the Phoenix airport, he continued to hear reports of new tremors.

"I never thought I'd be so scared in an earthquake," Franz says. "It's just nice to be home."

We're glad to have you back, Gary. *LP*

"People are without water and gas, there's no postal service, no banks, no business, no work," he said. "We are on a long road back."

He said that in the devastation people have flocked to the church. "Having 100 members means you are taking care of 500 in times of crisis, which is great," he said. "People start asking about God—even the insurance agencies call this an act of God."

But Cooper said he also saw a good aspect of the disaster. "People have built up walls and gates around themselves in fear of being robbed. All these walls between neighbors have been shaken down, and now neighbors are beginning to know neighbors for the first time. ... There is no power and no television. People are starting to get to know their families, too." *Larry Penner*

Past MCC exec discloses past misconduct

Winnipeg (*Mennonite Reporter*)—Daniel Zehr has disclosed inappropriate sexual behavior that occurred 18 years ago. Both the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) and Mennonite Central Committee Canada have issued public statements responding to the disclosure.

Zehr, who resigned as executive director of MCC Canada in fall 1992 and left the agency in June 1993, served as executive director from 1970-76 and from 1985-93.

He was to become pastor at Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Clearbrook, B.C., on Dec. 1, 1993.

According to a statement by CMC's Committee on Ministerial Leadership (CML), in late July 1993, Zehr confessed to CMC leaders that "he had engaged in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature ... in the mid-1970s over a period of some two years."

This behavior consisted of inappropriate hugging, fondling and touching of a young teenage girl. The incidents were not work related.

Process: Following the disclosure, CML initiated a process to assess whether Zehr should be allowed to pursue ministry; he had already accepted the position of pastor at Emmanuel.

According to its statement, CML created an ad hoc committee of four people, which included a support person for Zehr.

CML moved to allow Zehr to pursue ministry under set conditions:

- that some leadership people from Emmanuel Mennonite Church be informed,
- that Zehr meet with a spiritual mentor or peer at least monthly,
- that Zehr undertake further professional counseling,
- that a strategy for disclosure be developed should the misconduct become known,
- that the conference minister in British Columbia coordinate the process.

These steps were begun in September 1993.

With the help of the Conference of Mennonites in B.C. and Elizabeth Stellas of the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence,

Mennonite Central Committee women's concerns committees of Canada and the United States are encouraging congregations to set aside one Sunday in February to reflect on the tragedy of sexual and domestic violence in Christian homes and churches. The committees chose February to coincide with the beginning of Lent. A special worship resource packet titled "Lord, Hear Our Prayers" is available from all MCC offices.

* * *

"Prepare the Way of the Lord," based on Isaiah 40, will be the theme of the adult conference at Wichita '95. The joint convention of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church will be held in Wichita, Kan., July 25-30, 1995. The theme for the youth conference will be "With Jesus on the Road." Adults and youth will meet in Wichita's Century II Convention Center. Lodging will be available in 33 Wichita hotels. Up to 4,000 adults, 4,500 youth and 800 children are expected to attend.

* * *

Bob Williamson of Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center led conflict mediation workshops in Serbia Nov. 26-27, 1993. Williamson entered Yugoslavia at the invitation of Aleksandar Mitrovic, pastor of Christ's Pentecostal Church, Novi Sad, Serbia, to present the workshop at the church. Mitrovic participated in a Mediation Skills Training Institute in August 1993 co-sponsored by LMPC and Mennonite Central Committee. He said his church has supported members who have refused to engage in military combat. But while attending the institute, Mitrovic became convinced that his pacifism had implications beyond war. "Now I know it applies to all of life," he says.

Mennonite Central Committee Central States is sponsoring a conference on family violence and sexual abuse. The conference is scheduled for April 22-23 at Hillsboro (Kan.) Mennonite Brethren Church. Carolyn Holderread Heggen, author of *Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches*, will be the main speaker. Contact Dana Neff at MCC Central States, (316) 283-2720.

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The La Prensa Mennonite Church in Mexico City is celebrating 10 years spent helping Central American refugees. The church housed and fed hundreds and helped some complete paperwork for admission into Canada. "It wasn't just a quick thing; we had to keep helping. I remember a 7-year-old child who couldn't speak well because of the trauma she had experienced, but she got much better during her time here," recalled one church member.

• • •

Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, Pa., has canceled the tours and lectures of Jan Gleysteen for financial reasons and in response to allegations of inappropriate behavior toward women. Gleysteen has traveled extensively, presenting lectures on Anabaptist history and thought. He worked for the publishing house for 38 years. Gleysteen's congregation, Mennonite Church of Scottdale, and the Allegheny Mennonite Conference are investigating the allegations. In a statement to both his congregation and Mennonite Publishing House, Gleysteen said, "I admit that I have failed to realize that in my expressions of friendship and affirmation I had invaded some persons' 'private space.' To those I have offended ... I extend my sincere apologies." Prior to becoming aware of the allegations, MPH had decided to discontinue Gleysteen's position for financial reasons. He will be retiring in March. (*Gospel Herald*)

Seattle, Zehr decided to inform the congregation of the situation and allow them to reconsider the decision about acceptability of his ministry.

The day after the Dec. 8 congregational meeting, Zehr withdrew his availability to serve as pastor of Emmanuel.

Committed to ongoing work: A release issued by Zehr with the help of the B.C. conference said, "Zehr is committed to ongoing work essential to fuller healing and redemption."

The church has passed a motion to invite the Zehrs to become part of the congregation, "simply to attend and be involved, and to be loved," says Chris Arney, B.C. conference minister.

The church, through a unanimous vote, has asked April Yamasaki, the interim pastor, to remain as interim pastor until December.

Historical committee disbands

Newton, Kan. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)—The General Conference Mennonite Church Historical Committee has had its last hurrah.

Compiled by the committee, *Heritage Preservation: A Resource Book for Congregations* rolled off the press in January and was sent to every General Conference church.

But on Jan. 31, the end of the 1993 fiscal year, the committee's $5,000 was eliminated from the conference budget. Citing budget restrictions, the Commission on Education, which the committee was under, recommended the action last March.

That has prompted members of the committee to question GC leaders' interest in their church's history.

"Somewhere at the General Conference level there isn't an intrinsic support of heritage activities," said committee chair David Haury.

But COE officials say the cut was a matter of priorities in the face of financial belt-tightening, not an anti-history attitude or dissatisfaction with the committee.

"We've got decisions to make in COE in terms of budget past 1994, and other things that are valuable are going to have to come to an end because the resources aren't there," said COE executive secretary Norma Johnson.

While the elimination of the committee will leave a gap, COE officials pointed out that GC history activities will continue, such as the Mennonite Library and Archives in North Newton and especially various district conference historical committees.

The GC historical committee has cooperated with the Mennonite Church's historical committee, including planning a congregational historians' meeting scheduled for this fall in Harleysville, Pa. The meeting will go on, but now, said MC historical committee director Levi Miller, "there's no committee that represents the entire conference we can work with." *Rich Preheim*

Nigeria MCCer's work mistaken for arms buildup

Maiduguri, Nigeria (MCC)—Dave Klassen recently returned from Nigeria with a story of how rainwater tanks he helped build were mistaken for weapons caches and brought Muslim/Christian tension to a peak in Maiduguri.

Klassen, of Guelph, Ont., recently completed a Mennonite Central Committee term in Nigeria. During his term, local church development workers had asked him to help design and build tanks to catch rainwater from the church roof. Christians volunteered to help construct the tanks.

Rumors: But as people watched the Christians construct the tanks, Muslims from outside the community began to spread rumors that the Christians were constructing vaults to hold weapons for an offensive against Muslims.

At the end of the Ramadan Fast during the Salah Feast, Muslims came to their prayer ground armed and prepared for an attack. There was no assault, but animosity, fear and mistrust flared.

During this time, some university students came home for a visit. When they discovered the tension they brought Christian and Muslim leaders together to talk. This led to understanding and dispelled what could have sparked religious riots and bloodshed.

Usman Dauda, a Muslim university student, commented when discussing

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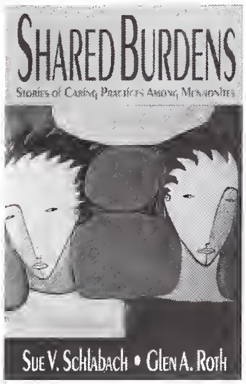
Mutual Aid • Humor • Music • Poetry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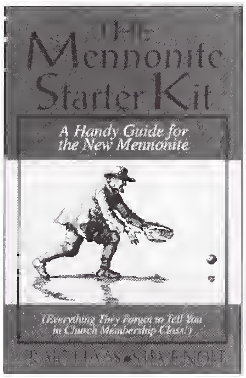
Stories of Caring Practices Among Mennonites
Sue V. Schlabach • Glen A. Roth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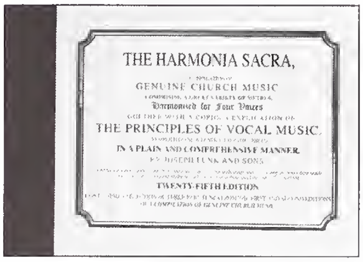
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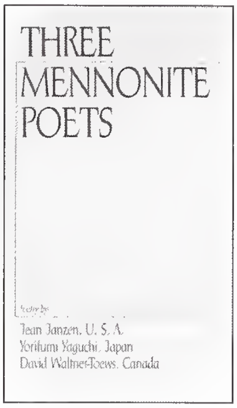
THREE MENNONITE POETS
Jean Janzen, U. S. A.
Yorifumi Yaguchi, Japan
David Waltner-Toews, Canada

Shared Burdens: Stories of Caring Practices Among Mennonites, by Sue V. Schlabach & Glen A. Roth

It is a practice that has distinguished Mennonites since their beginning—the unconditional offer of aid and assistance when trouble strikes a member. Commonly known as "mutual aid," the practice has expressed itself in barnraisings, in the community's providing ongoing care for a disabled individual, in their paying bills when a breadwinner has lost employment.

But now that only comparatively few Mennonites are self-employed, and now that many women work outside their homes, these people are less able to respond in traditional ways. On top of that, the community is faced with new varieties of "trouble"—those brought on by dysfunctional families, medical advances that extend life but don't remove the need for care, urban crises of poverty and race.

A candid exploration of how a traditional practice has been adapted to the modern world through stories.

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The Mennonite Starter Kit: A Handy Guide for the New Mennonite, by Craig Haas & Steve Nolt

What does it take to really become a Mennonite? **The Mennonite Starter Kit** takes a witty look at the assumed but unwritten requirements of acceptance into the Mennonite community. Tongue-in-cheek, the authors explore the maze of Mennonite jargon, acronyms, habits, and upside-down values confronting newcomers to Mennonite churches.

Whether you are considering"to join or not to join" the Mennonite community—or have been a Mennonite for years—you will enjoy this light-hearted, but insightful, look at contemporary Mennonite culture.

5½ x 8½ • 96 pages • 44 illustrations • $5.95, paperback

The Harmonia Sacra, Twenty-Fifth Edition, by Joseph Funk and Sons

First published in 1832 by Joseph Funk of the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, this popular shape-note hymnbook has enjoyed sales of nearly 100,000 copies. This new edition is built on the 12th edition (1866), the first 4-part edition. It includes materials added in later editions, as well as a section of three-part tunes from the early editions. Funk was known as "the father of music" in northern Virginia. His hymnbook was used in singing schools and for church use among Mennonites and many others. This beloved hymnbook is still used widely today by singings and song groups. This new edition brings to the public the best of this rich tradition in music.

9½ x 6¼ (horizontal) • 407 pages • $19.95, hardcover

Three Mennonite Poets, by Jean Janzen, Yorifumi Yaguchi & David Waltner-Toews

This well-received collection features three poets who differ widely in culture and style, yet are rooted in common values. Yorifumi Yaguchi is a well-known Japanese poet and professor. Jean Janzen is a Fresno, California, poet whose work has appeared in many literary magazines, and David Waltner-Toews is a Canadian with several books to his credit.

What reviewers say— *"An unlikely gathering of excellent poems."* **—Hiram Poetry Review**

"Nature and current events are simultaneously addressed in these lines, most of which reckon in quietly sad ways with the virtues of quiet and peace, the simple life and humans who seek both. **—Christian Century**

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At its meeting Dec. 12-16, 1993, in Techny, Ill., the Council of International Ministries voted to ask Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in North America to set aside the first Sunday of Lent, Feb. 20, for prayer and fasting for world peace.

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When Zachariah Zelin of San Diego opened the G.I. Joe doll he received for Christmas, the doll asked, "Want to go shopping?" A group called the Barbie Liberation Organization, which claims to fight gender-based stereotyping in toys, says it surreptitiously switched the voice boxes on 300 G.I. Joe and Barbie dolls across the United States. Some Barbie dolls now say, "Dead men tell no lies," while G.I. Joes say, "I love school. Don't you?" Zachariah refused to give up his Joe. "I love him," he says. "I like everything about him. He's teaching me not to fight." *(Gospel Herald)*

• • •

The Mexican government officially recognized the United Anabaptist Mennonite Church of Mexico as a legal religious entity Nov. 8, 1993. Constitutional reform has allowed the government to recognize the legal existence of churches, allowing them to own property and allow foreigners to be ministers. The existing five Mennonite conferences in the country joined as one entity to request recognition as a national church. The conferences remain autonomous, but meet under the new structure to deal with administrative, legal and fiscal matters. Church workers now have access to social security, housing and retirement benefits.

Dave Klassen (MCC)

Work of the church: *A church women's group cultivates a field to raise funds for songbooks, uniforms and instruments. Most people in northern Nigeria are Muslim; Christianity is dominant in the South. Conflict between the two groups, sometimes fueled by land ownership questions, has erupted into violence that has killed several hundred Nigerians in recent years.*

the peace and unity that exists now in the village, "[We have] realized that neither of the two religions is preaching fanaticism. What they are preaching is peace. Peace all over the world. No religion can function when there is no peace. Whether you are a Muslim or Christian you need peace to practice your religion."

Albanian Christian visits United States

Salunga, Pa. (EMM)—Bujar Bala, raised Muslim, is one of the first Christians in Albania since the fall of communism. "Christianity is not a religion," he told Eastern Mennonite Missions staff Jan. 3 before returning to Albania. He was in the United States on a six-month scholarship for exposure to a free-enterprise system.

"Christ brings us into a right and joyful relationship with God; religions can't do that," Bala said.

When Bala was 10, his grandmother began secretly teaching him from the Koran. At that time, Albania was under communist rule and religious expressions were banned. Bala said that members of his family were imprisoned for their expression of religion.

At age 22, Bala saw the movie *Jesus*, which was shown in Albania by a Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions team only a few months after the fall of communism. After seeing the movie, he heard the Lord saying to him, "Look, I am dying just for you." Bala then went home and spent the next several days in his room reading a New Testament.

A personal book: "The Bible seemed new to me at that point," he said. "It seemed like God's personal book for me." At home later that week Bala accepted Christ as his Savior.

Before Bala came to the United States, he was working in statistics for the Albanian government. After his return to Albania he began working for "Lift Up Albania," an organization sponsored by a group of businesspeople related to Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions. The organization will send medical, educational and business teams to assist Albanians and share the gospel.

Two months after Bala came to the United States, he learned that his mother and brother had become Christians. He was eager to go back home to meet his "new mother and brother." "I have a vision for Albania to become a Christian mission sending center for Muslim communities in surrounding countries," he said. *Julie E. Hershey*

Record

DEATHS

Paul Boschman, Emmanuel Church, Abbotsford, B.C., 70, died Jan. 19. Boschman served with the Commission on Overseas Mission in Japan from 1951-1971, pastored Mountainview Church in Vancouver and West Abbotsford (B.C.) Church. He served on the Commission on Home Ministries and worked as part-time coordinator for Chinese Ministries under CHM and Congregational Resources Board.

Kenneth Shelly, Newton, Kan., died Jan. 5 at age 63. Shelley served as pastor at Pulaski (Iowa) Church, Apostolic Church, Trenton, Ohio, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., and Hebron Church, Buhler, Kan.

WORKERS

Han and **Martha Vandenberg** are serving as ministers of visitation at Cornerstone Church, Saskatoon.

Allen and **Marie Yoder**, Silverwood Church, Goshen, Ind., have begun a three-year voluntary term as co-ministers of major gift development for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

The 12th MCC Central States meeting is set for Saturday, Feb. 26, at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb. The theme will be "Celebrating 50 Years of Service." The meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. and run through the noon hour.

• • •

The Ecumenical Council of Cuba recently experimented by placing 600 copies of the Bible for sale in a state-run bookstore. They sold out in 40 minutes. Organized religion there has resurged. The Protestant seminary in Matanzas, which had dropped to two students in the mid-1980s, today has 43 and a waiting list. The Methodist church, which had fallen to 3,000 members in the late 1960s, today has at least 30,000 active members. Churches report that most new members are under 20 years of age.

Goshen College, a four-year liberal arts institution, is accepting applications for a full-time two-year sabbatical/leave replacement in the **computer and information science** department. The position is open for the 1994-95 and 1995-96 academic years. Teaching responsibilities will include lower- and upper-division undergraduate courses such as CS1, CS2, discrete math, data structures, data communications, programming languages and operating systems. A Ph.D. in computer science or a related area is preferred. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

To apply send a curriculum vitae and three professional references to **Dr. John Eby, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526, (219) 533-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

Goshen College seeks applicants for a three-quarter-time, tenure-track position in **applied voice** (soprano or alto) with additional responsibilities in opera/musical theater. A terminal degree is preferred; a master's degree and college-level teaching experience are required. Should the candidate possess training and experience in choral conducting or music education the contract may be more than three-quarters time on a year-to-year basis. However, these additional duties will not be a part of the tenured position. The screening of applications began Jan. 30, and the position will remain open until filled.

Send a curriculum vitae and three references to **Dr. John Eby, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.** Women and minorities encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Welcome Inn Community Centre and Church, a Mennonite-sponsored agency in north-end Hamilton, Ont., is seeking an energetic, pastoral **person to coordinate programs for seniors** (weekly lunch program visitation, etc.). Requires the ability to work cooperatively with a team of staff and volunteers. Responsibilities include reporting, budgeting and submissions to government. Proposed starting date is April 1. Qualifications include experience in working with seniors and knowledge of services available, organizational skills in program planning and administration within a team framework. Post-secondary training in related disciplines would be an asset. Welcome Inn offers a variety of programs for all ages, with a special focus on people with low incomes.

Apply in writing by Feb. 25 to **Harry Nigh, Executive Director, Welcome Inn Community Centre, 40 Wood St. East, Hamilton, ON L8L 3Y3.**

Bethel College is seeking candidates for two tenure-track faculty positions beginning August 1994. The first is in **social sciences**, where the successful candidate will have a Ph.D. in either sociology or political science, and demonstrated interest in one or more related fields: international development, public policy or conflict resolution. The second is in **mathematics**, where a variety of sub-specialities will be considered. Ph.D. is required.

Bethel also wishes to fill a one-year appointment in **English**. This is a sabbatical replacement whose teaching load will include fundamentals of English and some lower-level literature courses. Ph.D. preferred but qualified master's candidates will be considered.

For all positions commitment to undergraduate teaching, interdisciplinary collaboration and Bethel's mission as a church-related college are essential; familiarity with disciplinary software and network applications desired. Qualifications and experience will be considered for salary and rank. Applications should include resumé, three letters of reference and recent graduate school transcript if applicable. Consideration will begin Feb. 15 and continue until the positions are filled.

Materials should be sent to **Wynn M. Goering, Academic Dean, Bethel College, 300 E. 27th St., North Newton, KS 67117.** Bethel is an equal opportunity employer and especially encourages women and minorities to apply.

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MCC British Columbia

is searching for a person to fill the position of

Executive Director

beginning in the summer of 1994

This person will be responsible for
- the administration of MCC B.C. programs,
- promoting and interpreting MCC B.C. to the constituency and the wider public,
- coordinating the office, which includes supervising, recruiting and maintaining office staff,
- relating to the wider MCC organization and to affiliated boards, committees and other agencies.

The successful applicant must
- have a good grasp of the larger MCC program,
- have strong administrative skills and abilities,
- have a strong personal vision for MCC,
- have good communications skills, and the ability to relate well to a wide spectrum of the constituency, including youth,
- have an understanding and appreciation for a servant-leadership style,
- be able to relate well to the public.

Persons interested should send a resumé to

Dave Loewen
Personnel Committee Chair
32187 Golden Ave.,
Clearbrook, BC V2T 5C5

Phone: (604) 859-7697
Fax: (604) 859-9206

Application deadline: Feb. 28

LET US DO GOOD TO ALL PEOPLE

Eden Health Care Services,

a service of the Mennonite churches and the province
of Manitoba, invites applications for the position of

Executive Director
effective July 1994

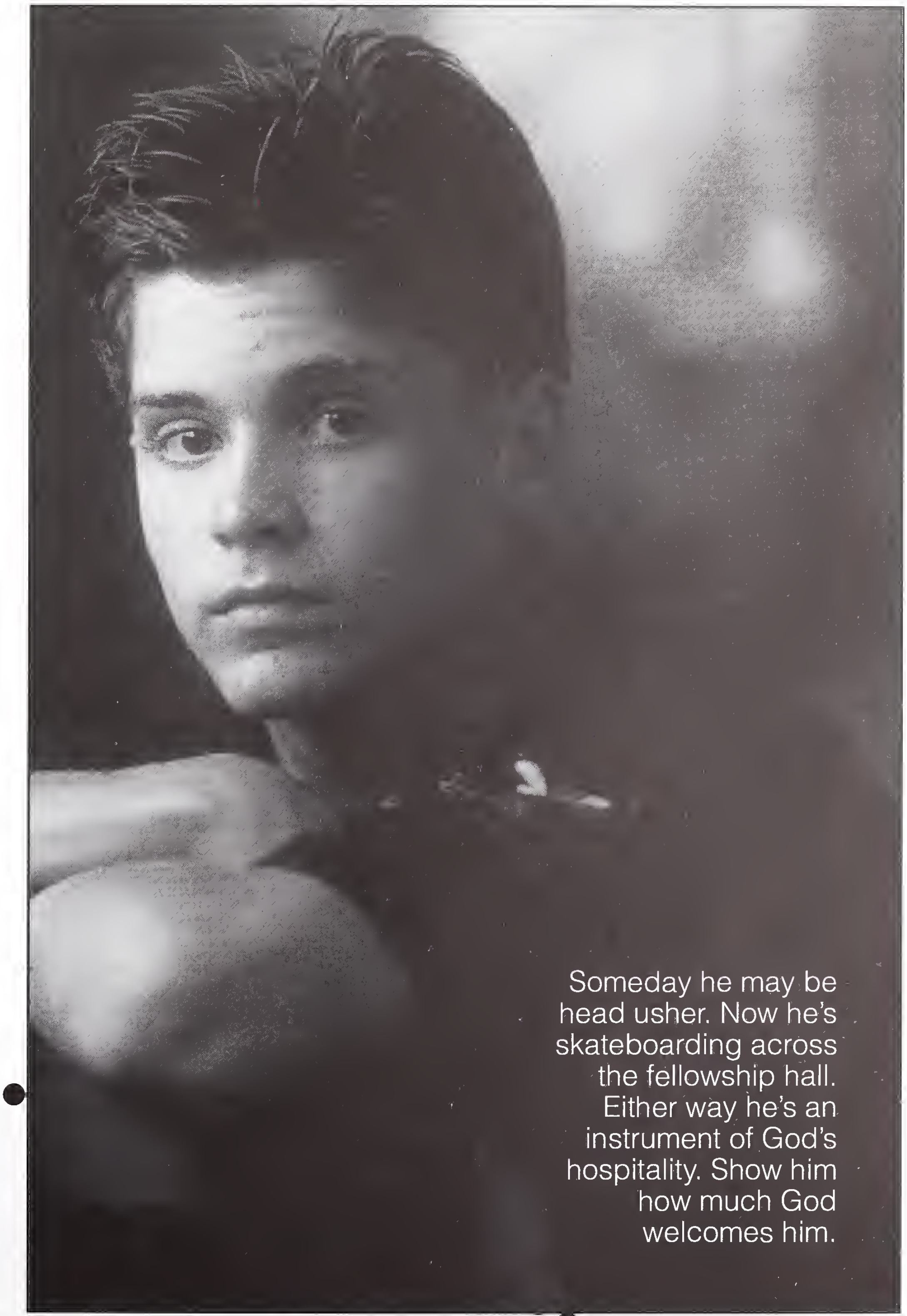
Applicants should have a record of successful administrative experience, demonstrated leadership skills and commitment to health-care administration in a Christian context.

Direct resumés to:

Chair of the Search Committee
Box 129, Winkler, MB R6W 4A4
Phone: (204) 661-4922 Fax: (204) 325-8742

Closing date: Feb. 28

FUTURE USHER



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Reviews

FILMS

Beyond the books

Shadowlands, *written by William Nicholson, produced by Richard Attenborough and Brian Eastman, directed by Richard Attenborough*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor

This true story of C.S. Lewis' relationship with Joy Gresham in the 1950s is almost guaranteed to move you to tears. If the crowd with which I saw the film is any indication, it will especially move men to tears.

Lewis (Anthony Hopkins) is an Oxford don, a bachelor well into his 50s, a stuffy British intellectual whose colleagues at the pub kid him about the children's books (the immensely popular series *The Chronicles of Narnia*) he has written when he hardly ever sees children. He lives with his bachelor brother in a modest home.

Then into his life comes Joy Gresham (Debra Winger), an American poet, former Jew and Communist, now a Christian and a fan of Lewis' writing. On the brink of divorce from an alcoholic husband, she visits Lewis with her 9-year-old son. Her feisty, candid personality is the opposite of the stoic, tight-lipped Lewis, who tells her one can learn about suffering and love from books and need not learn from personal experience. The film tells how he learns otherwise.

We witness snatches from a speech Lewis gives to various groups about how suffering is a gift from God to shape us into more perfect people. We cannot know happiness, he says, unless we know suffering. His words come back to haunt him as he grows to love Joy, who moves to England with her son after her divorce.

When tragedy comes, Lewis must confront his deepest Christian beliefs and ask if they are true. His struggle becomes our struggle as we watch in agony his pain and eventual catharsis.

Shadowlands, based on Nicholson's stage play, is an engrossing romantic story, with many humorous moments, and its theological content is pleasantly surprising. It is paced well as it moves toward its inexorable end, and it is beautifully filmed. But what carries it over the top as one of the year's best are the outstanding performances of Hopkins and Winger. It's a must-see.

BOOKS

Practical prayer

The Book of Daily Prayer, *compiled by Robert Webber (Eerdmans, 1993, 532 pages)*

Reviewed by Arthur P. Boers, Waterloo, Ont.

As a youth I had no difficulty praying. I spent hours conversing with God while wandering the fields near our house or secluded in my bedroom. But I had a crisis of faith when my only sister died at age 17. I found myself no longer able to be on such familiar terms with God. My prayer lapsed. For a long time I wondered whether I would ever pray again.

Happily I encountered Christians who showed me that prayer takes many forms, not just conversational. A newly-converted Mennonite and die-hard Protestant, I was suspicious of formal prayers. But I gradually learned the merit in praying the prayers of the church. In so doing we join our prayers with other Christians, give voice to our deepest longings and yearnings and let the Spirit direct our heart. Ever since, I have kept looking for practical prayer resources.

I was not surprised that Robert Webber, a professor at Wheaton (Ill.) College, produced a particularly good resource. He has written and spoken widely on spirituality, worship and evangelism. He has helped many Evangelicals deepen and broaden their understanding of prayer and worship.

His book provides prayers and Bible readings for every day of the year. Devotional time is divided into Preparation (Theme, Opening Prayer), Hearing God Speak (Scripture Reading) and Response (Responsorial Psalm, Prayer, Intercessions, Closing Prayer). Webber also provides guidelines that will help prevent failure. He might have made this book more useful if he explained occasional terms—such as "antiphon"—that might be foreign to some readers.

By taking seriously the Christian calendar, this book encourages us to organize our prayers around the themes of Christ's life. Webber explains why we need the Christian calendar to counterbalance the secular calendars of the civil year or the aca-

Hans Denk said, "No one can truly know Christ unless he follows him in life."

Our tour leaders will tell you what else Hans said.

South America, Mar. 7-24, Cal & Freda Redekop
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European Anabaptist Heritage, Aug. 1-18, Cal Redekop & Henry Landes
Lands of the Bible, Sept. 6-20, Ken & Kass Seitz
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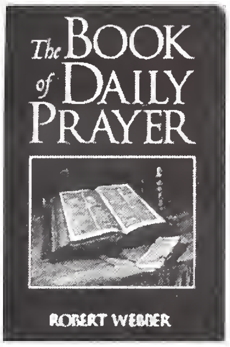
demic year. Each season (Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost) is helpfully introduced.

Webber knows that many Christians have a hard time praying daily.



He writes, "Prayer is often difficult because it is the one area in life where some Christians feel that external guides and directions are *not* necessary. But *The Book of Daily Prayer* takes into account the need we all have for guidance and leadership in prayer."

Broad Christianity

Encountering God—A Spiritual Journey From Bozeman to Banaras *by Diana L. Eck (Beacon Press, 1993, 256 pages)*

Reviewed by Tim Cooper, Upland, Cal.

In *Encountering God*, Eck, professor of comparative religions at Harvard University, speaks with candor about what other religious traditions and heritages contribute to our knowledge of God. "Dialogue is not a debate but a search for a wider understanding of Truth," she writes.

Eck says that we as Christians too often trip over our own dogma. Our narrow reading of the centrality of Christ may arrest our development as his disciples. Throughout the book, she shares how her own faith (she is a Methodist) has been enriched by discussing Christ with people of other religions.

The book moves from travelogue and conversations with sages and pilgrims of other faiths to chapters that offer systematic overviews of issues every Christian should ponder, such as what form does God's universal love take to those outside the Christian confession?

As Christians, our faith is empowered by the Holy Spirit, who guides us into unfamiliar holy spaces. "What we must be able to do," Eck writes, "is to recognize and clearly articulate our deep and guiding values, our criteria, and place them in clear, critical conversation with others."

Eck reminds us: "The Kingdom of God is much wider than the church. It is the Kingdom of God, not the Christian Church. The role of the immediate followers of Christ in bringing this about is not imagined in grandiose language but in the most humble of domestic language. We are to be like yeast in the bread dough, like salt in the food, like a light to the path."

The voice of God seems seldom heard anymore outside the friendly confines of our congregations. Go exploring with this book and you may discover our God is a lot bigger than you thought.

When the wall fell

The Wrong Side of the Wall: An American in East Berlin During the Peaceful Revolution *by Mark Jantzen (self-published, 1993, 213 pages)*

Reviewed by Duane K. Friesen, North Newton, Kan.

The Wrong Side of the Wall is the story of Mark Jantzen's experience in East Berlin from September 1988 through September 1991, while he was on an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee as a theology student at Humboldt University. Jantzen went to East Germany as a Christian seeking peace and reconciliation with those living under communism. As a participant and witness, he describes in vivid detail and with a sense of humor the dramatic events that led to the crumbling of the Berlin Wall in November 1989.

Because of the span of time Jantzen was in service, he helps us understand three phases of life in East Berlin: life within a repressive Marxist regime, the largely nonviolent and peaceful transformation that led to the demise of East German Marxism, and the issues that confronted East Germans in building a new society after the revolution.

Especially interesting is his description of the role the church played in the nonviolent transformation of East German society. In 1981 a youth pastor and some young people started Monday prayer services for peace at the St. Nicholai Church in Leipzig, one of the small seeds planted early that contributed to the crumbling of the Berlin Wall. In 1988 these prayer services became the locus of larger groups of East German citizens gathering to discuss social issues. By October 1989, 300,000 people gathered in Leipzig to demonstrate, despite police harassment and arrests.

A similar process occurred at the Gethsemane Church in East Berlin and at other churches throughout East Germany. Jantzen tells of his participation, together with his friends from the university, in the gatherings at the Gethsemane Church, and of their dramatic escape by a ladder over a wall to avoid the police, who had surrounded the church.

This book should be read by all those interested in the power of nonviolent social change and the creative role of the church in that process. We can be grateful to Jantzen for sharing one more example in our growing repertoire of case studies of successful nonviolent social change.

The Wrong Side of the Wall may be purchased for $10 U.S. from Henry and Gretl Jantzen, 1415 Summit St., Beatrice, NE 68310.

Resources

- **The Molotschna Settlement** (English translation, Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society and CMBC Publications) is the fifth volume of the Echo Historical Series. For price information and ordering contact CMBC Publications, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.
- **Ancestral fan charts** allow one to record one's ancestors back to the 10th generation. Designed by the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, printed on acid-free stock, 25 inches high by 36.5 inches wide. Order from LMHS, 2215 Millsream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602, (717) 393-9745; $6 U.S. per copy plus $2.50 p/h.
- **Compelled by Conscience: Why We Need a Peace Tax Fund** is a 21-minute VHS video from the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund. Available from MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151.

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Editorial

Open doors, open minds

Back when I was a student at Wichita (Kan.) State University, I struggled with how or whether to be involved in a local congregation. I wasn't so sure the congregations I visited struggled with how to involve me.

I believed that God worked primarily through the local congregation, and I attended worship as regularly as most students I knew and more regularly than many. However, most of my time revolved around being a student. At the same time, I was involved in WSU's InterVarsity Christian Fellowship chapter. My most intimate fellowship was with other Christian students, not with any church.

My friends and I used to argue about the importance of the local church. One friend said that when a group of us got together for a Bible study or to worship, we were a church. Intellectually, I disagreed, but emotionally I resonated with what he said.

As I look back I realize that I had unrealistic expectations of churches, and churches probably had unrealistic expectations of students. Students are not only busy but preoccupied. Even when I wasn't studying I was always aware of studying I needed to do eventually. Those assignments and tests looming on the horizon hung over me throughout each semester. And while I enjoyed school, I also felt a rush of freedom when I graduated.

Now Jeanne, my wife, is a graduate student (in social work). For the past 2 1/2 years I've watched her put in long hours reading textbooks, researching topics and writing papers. While part of me envies her the stimulation of wrestling with new ideas and making new discoveries in a field of study, I'm more often glad to be working at my job or handling tasks at home. And I have a renewed appreciation for students and how little time they have to give to the church.

> Students often bring a vibrancy, a sense of newness, an openness to go wherever the Lord may lead, something each of our churches needs.

In this issue (see pages 3-8) Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Heidi Regier Kreider and Steve Ratzlaff remind us of the need of our churches to reach out to university students. These writers have been or are pastors who have dedicated much time to ministering to students. These students may not have much time or energy to give to the church while they are in school but they nevertheless need a church family.

Ministering to them can be frustrating and energy consuming, and the rewards may not come directly to us. Students usually move away after finishing school, then use their gifts in another church. But if we do not reach out and welcome them, they may not use their gifts in any church.

Forming values: Our investment in these students can have far-reaching effects. When I was at university, I saw a number of people make choices to become Christians or to give their lives more fully to the Lord. Students are at a crossroads in their lives and will be making making major decisions about career or marriage as well as forming values. A local church can be a pivotal place for students to connect their vocational life with their spiritual life. It can be a safe place to explore ideas and directions.

What's in it for congregations? Students often bring a vibrancy, a sense of newness, an openness to go wherever the Lord may lead, something each of our churches needs. Are we willing to open our doors to students without strings attached? Are we willing to listen to their concerns, to be that place where they can test their ideas?

I'm thankful for those congregations that welcomed me, for the people who invited me to their homes for dinner, who showed a genuine interest in what concerned me. I pray that I as a church member will show that same kind of openness and concern to the students that visit my congregation. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

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What to do about the pastor shortage / p. 10

How your family can live on one income / p. 11

A Mennonite by accident / p. 12

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THE
Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 04
FEBRUARY 22, 1994

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARIES
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- The legacy of witness in China (see page 7)
- Daniel in the dragon's den (see page 9)

A new generation of mission workers

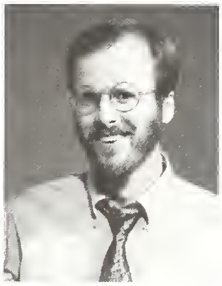
A group of young adults heading for Latin America speaks out about mission in a new context.

Prologue

The mission of the church lives on as new people take up the call to follow Jesus, to proclaim the gospel to unfamiliar parts of the globe. As that call is renewed in each generation, the understanding of mission is refined. We cannot do mission the same as we always have. A changing world requires new strategies of bringing the Good News.

Listen to the voices of five new mission workers as they set out to live in Latin America (pages 3-6). We have much to learn from their testimony.

Since China has become more open to the presence of Westerners, the Commission on Overseas Mission has been sending workers there through China Educational Exchange. The living church these people have discovered is a testimony to the faithfulness of a previous generation of mission workers who had to leave the country during the Cultural Revolution. Read the comments of Chinese Christians who give thanks for the witness of these mission workers (pages 7-9).



Vern Preheim addresses the critical pastoral shortage in our church (page 10). J.B. Miller offers tips to families about how to live on one income (page 11). And assistant editor Larry Penner presents a profile of Alberto Muñoz (page 12), who became a Mennonite through interesting means. *gh*

Next issue: The challenges of Christian education.

Cover: Design by John Hiebert

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

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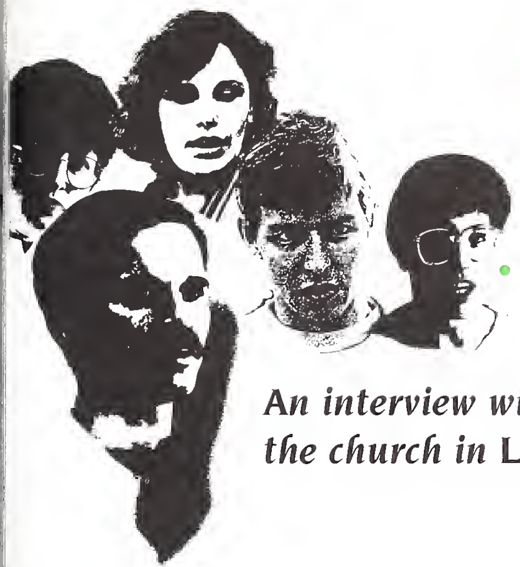
A new generation of mission workers



An interview with five new mission workers now serving the church in Latin America

Carla Reimer, news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church, conducted this interview with five mission workers prior to their departure. The mission workers are serving in Latin America with the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission (COM). The following is a brief description of their assignments: Gloria and Mark Epp, members of Zoar Mennonite Church, Langham, Sask., are serving in Recife, Brazil, where they are involved with Mennonite churches in evangelism, discipleship and leadership development. (Mark was not able to attend the interview.) Julie and Bryan Moyer Suderman, members of First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont., began work in Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia, at the end of November 1993. Bryan works with youth ministries of the Mennonite Church in Colombia, and Julie works in Christian education with the churches and schools. Frank Albrecht and Elizabeth Soto-Albrecht, members of Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., are also serving in Santafé de Bogotá. Elizabeth is the director of CLARA, a Latin American Anabaptist Resource Center, and Frank is working with peace and justice concerns with the Mennonite Church in Colombia.

What do you see yourselves leaving behind—both physically and emotionally?

Gloria: We're ready to go. In a physical sense, we're not leaving much behind. Mark and I got married in June 1991, when we were students at Canadian Mennonite Bible College [in Winnipeg]. We spent the last two summers farming, so we didn't gain much in terms of material possessions. The hardest thing emotionally, especially now that we have a daughter, is saying goodbye to Mark's parents. They gave us a lot of support, and we will miss them.

• • • • • • • • • •

What has led these young adults to leave their homes in North America and head south?

Elizabeth: Frank and I have been married for two years. We have a daughter and a home in Lancaster. It feels like things were beginning to come together for us, and now we will be starting again. We also were part of an intentional community, a group of young Mennonites with a common vision and history ... and that feels like a loss. [See the Sept. 28, 1993, issue of *The Mennonite*, page 3, for a story about that community.]

Julie: I'm not sure Bryan and I are leaving much behind physically speaking. We both recently graduated after six years of university. We were married 18 months ago, and last year we lived in a furnished apartment. Our wedding gifts and most of the things we have accumulated are still in boxes. Emotionally I am leaving my family, although they are fairly scattered. On the other hand, I am looking forward to being close to Bryan's parents [who live in Santafé de Bogotá], an opportunity I've never had before.

Bryan: When many people talk about going overseas, they talk about uprooting and uncertainty. Julie and I will face some of that, but I think we are looking forward to settling down in a place where we at least have a three-year assignment. To us that seems like a long time because we have moved around quite a bit. It is also the first time we will have full-time jobs. So in a sense, the change feels like we are moving toward greater stability, not instability.

Frank: I'm leaving a community, a job and a home. I feel like I am leaving something that had been stable for me. Probably the hardest things to leave were my job as a high school teacher and the intentional community that Ely and I belong to. Seventeen of us would get together three mornings a week for prayer. I am also leaving my brothers and

"I don't feel like I'm going because I am strong but because I am weak and need to consciously train myself to live a lifestyle of service."

Bryan Moyer Suderman

sisters and my mother, who is a widow and is used to having her first grandchild within walking distance. But I feel like I am moving toward something, not away from something. Since I was in college, I have wanted to serve overseas.

Tell about some specific experiences or relationships that led to your interest in mission work.

Julie: It is something I have wanted to do for a long time. After three years at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, I decided to go overseas with the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) SALT program. It so happened I ended up in Bolivia, where Bryan had spent time as a child. This experience shaped my interest in future overseas work. It also made me realize that longer term is better than shorter term because it takes a while to understand the culture, develop relationships and learn the language.

Elizabeth: I worked with MCC for four years with the Latin American desk. I did some extensive traveling through Latin America and the Caribbean. I felt that one day I wasn't going to be sending people; it was going to be my turn. For me, in many ways, it is going home, going back to my Latin American roots, since I grew up in Puerto Rico.

Gloria: I became a Christian in Costa Rica when I was 15. I got involved with my church right away because there was such a need for leaders. I became aware of the need for mission work and hoped one day to be able to prepare myself for that role. This dream became a reality when I was 19 and was accepted into the MCC International Visitor Exchange Program and came to Canada for a year of work. Through my host family I received a scholarship to go to Canadian Mennonite Bible College, which is where I met Mark. He was also interested in serving in Latin America.

Bryan: I feel this is a part of where my whole life has been heading. When I was 11, my family moved to Bolivia, where my parents were mission workers for five years. Those years had a strong impact in terms of my personal development, faith and the way I looked at the world. From then on, I felt I would like to live and work overseas—it's simply an extension of the lifestyle that my parents have taught by example. One of the reasons Julie and I would like to go overseas at this early stage in our marriage is because we would like to train ourselves to live a lifestyle of service. We feel it would become all too easy to fall into patterns that emphasize personal accumulation. Some people tell us they think we are strong to go overseas, which I find frustrating. I don't feel like I'm going because I am strong but because I am weak and need to consciously train myself to live a lifestyle of service.

Frank: My family was interested in relating to people who were less fortunate. My parents attended a little mission church; they often took people to church who weren't able to provide their own transportation. This set the stage for me to live a lifestyle that would be different from the average American. I ended up at Eastern Mennonite College [Harrisonburg, Va.], where I became aware of global concerns and how the United States fits into the picture. Since then I've felt uncomfortable with my country's paternalistic and imperialistic relationship with our southern neighbors. I told myself, if I serve in Latin America I want the people there to know that not all Americans like what our government does.

What kinds of frustrations do you expect to encounter overseas?

Julie: One of the initial challenges for me is language. Bryan is already fluent in Spanish. I think it will be difficult at first for me to develop my own sense of identity. In a culture that tends to be chauvinistic, I want to be able to speak for myself. Because of our different language abilities, it would be easy at first for Bryan to speak for me. This would fit into the cultural patterns nicely, but I would be uncomfortable with that.

"I don't like the word missionary, but I do like the word mission. I hope to share the gifts I have with Latin Americans, but I also plan to come back to Lancaster and apply what I have learned."

Frank Albrecht

> *"I look forward to the energy that comes across from people who have very little."*
>
> Julie Moyer Suderman

Gloria: I grew up in that Latin American culture and rebelled against it. Mark and I are planning to share parenting because it is important to us. But in a culture where the husband never touches a dirty dish and the wife does everything, I think it will be hard for us to be sensitive to the people around us and yet be ourselves.

Elizabeth: I think the challenge for me is my job description, because I haven't worked in the publication field before.

Frank: One challenge will be not having as much money at my disposal to help meet the needs of the people who ask me for money. I don't know what I'm going to do when somebody has a bad toothache that needs to be fixed. We're going to be on a mission volunteer salary of $150 per month. We could go back into our American bank account that has several thousand dollars, but that is a Band-Aid approach. I am also not sure how I will fit into the culture. I'm assertive and outspoken. I think people there are more reserved about confronting others, and I want to be sensitive to that. I also think it will be hard for me to see blatant injustices and not be able to voice my concerns like I can in the United States.

Bryan: I know my work will be challenging. My job description literally means accompanying people, walking with them; it will be difficult to know what that means and how to do it.

What are you looking forward to about your assignments?

Gloria: I look forward to living in one place.

Elizabeth: I want to rescue my language skills; I want to be fluent in Spanish again.

Frank: I want to dialogue with people back in Lancaster about my experience. I see a large part of my role as informing people about what it's like in the Third World. I also want to see if Colombians, living on about $2,000 a year, are happier, less happy or about equal to Americans. If they are as happy with less money, I'd like to learn some of their secrets.

Julie: I look forward to different forms of worship. I look forward to the energy that comes across from people who have very little.

Do you have stereotypes of missionaries?

Gloria: I grew up in Costa Rica, and missionaries came and stayed with us. I had the view, which I think the whole church shared, that they knew everything. They were humble, good people, but we put them in that position. There was such a big gap between the training the missionaries had and what our church leaders knew about the Bible. Let's get real; I don't consider myself a missionary. Still, I feel confident I have something to contribute without having all the answers.

Frank: I don't see our work there as any more important than my job as a high school teacher in Lancaster [Pa.]. I don't like the word missionary, but I do like the word mission. I hope to share the gifts I have with Latin Americans, but I also plan to come back to Lancaster and apply what I have learned.

Julie: One of the reasons Bryan and I accepted this assignment is because the Colombian Mennonite Church there does not consider us missionaries. They have invited us to serve and to walk with them. I find that exciting. The roles of men and women are also changing, although more needs to be done in this area. In the past, the men got credit for the work. Women have lots to offer in the global context, and that connection needs to be made. Many still have a 1940s picture about mission work, which is why I have such a negative reaction to the word missionary.

Bryan: As a missionary kid I was exposed to different models of what missionaries are all about. For me the word missionary has become laden with the meaning of a person who thinks he or she has all the answers for the world. In studying the history of missions in Latin America, I have encountered many examples of well-meaning missionaries who caused hardships. I want to be acutely aware and sensitive of our role as foreigners who have been invited to walk alongside our Colombian brothers and sisters.

Elizabeth: I have negative views of the term missionary. Even in my position with COM, I don't see myself as a missionary but instead as a servant. As I hear all of us speak, I see that COM is creating a new generation of mission workers who have specific tasks. We are not necessarily able to dedicate 20 to 30 years, but we want to dedicate part of our lives to being exposed to the larger world—doing mission work and being transformed by mission work.

How will you, as a new generation of mission workers, share your faith in Latin America?

Frank: I hope not to pretend I have a corner on the truth. I would like to be open-minded. That doesn't mean moving away from Jesus and the Holy Spirit. I would like to learn from my Christian brothers and sisters and allow myself to change in healthy, positive ways.

Gloria: For me, the struggle is that the church in Latin America is authoritarian ... a big, bad dictator. I haven't met the God of mercy in Costa Rica. So as I go to Brazil I'll bring a different image of God.

Elizabeth: I want to take a clear sense of who I am as an Anabaptist. Forty years ago mission boards from our denominations sent good people who didn't always have a good sense

"[The Commission on Overseas Mission] is creating a new generation of mission workers who have specific tasks."

Elizabeth Soto-Albrecht

of Anabaptist history and faith. They created generic, evangelical churches. I want to journey together with my Latin American sisters and brothers about what it means to be an Anabaptist in Latin America today.

Bryan: I would take lots of empty notebooks as a symbol of how much I need to learn.

Why is the Anabaptist message relevant to Latin Americans?

Gloria: In Brazil people are asking what it means to be a Mennonite. It is important to have a clear vision of the Anabaptist faith because of the strength in Latin America of churches that tend to spiritualize everything. We need to offer people spiritual hope as we work with them on social problems.

Elizabeth: Anabaptists have a sense of community. Pentecostals pray for a member's financial need, while Anabaptists take up an offering. We look for ways we can serve each other. Mennonites in Puerto Rico were not noisy like the Pentecostals; they didn't fill huge church buildings. But the Mennonite missionaries were people who projected God's love, and I think I'm a product of that discipleship.

Frank: One way we manifest that love is through nonviolent behavior. I know that we are going into a violent society, so I am looking forward to helping teach that aspect of our Anabaptist faith.

Bryan: When I was in college a few years ago, I spent one summer in Colombia researching the issue of Colombian Mennonites and conscientious objection. As part of that process, I talked to a lot of people in the Colombian Mennonite Church who inspired me with their stories and their vision. They see a need for alternatives to the violence in Colombia. I think they are on the cutting edge of what it means to be Anabaptist.

"We need to offer people spiritual hope as we work with them on social problems."

Gloria Epp

What are some specific things that churches in North America can do to be in touch with overseas mission?

Gloria: A lot of traditional Mennonite churches are inward looking. They think of mission as putting money into the offering plate. They have lost their sense of mission. One of the best things they can do is plan a learning tour in a big city in North America where they can see reality. Then they may realize that if this is what is happening here, what is happening in the Third World?

Bryan: I suggest they seek out alternative media sources. Even just reading the newspaper is a step in the right direction. The bottom line is to begin to be globally aware.

Elizabeth: In my previous work with MCC, eight to 10 were chosen to travel to Central America and then come back to their congregations to tell what they saw and heard. We have to be committed to learning about what's going on away from our comfortable countries.

Julie: Churches need to remember that the exchanges shouldn't just happen with adults but also with youth and university students. Many youth and young adults tend to go overseas with non-Mennonite agencies that offer short-term assignments. Upon returning, their view of overseas mission does not reflect Anabaptist missiology. We have a number of friends who have gone to Latin America for short-term service, and when they come back they feel they don't have a place in our churches. Somehow their voices aren't being heard.

Frank: I think we need to connect with people's pain, whatever that might be, as a way of understanding what we're trying to do. ... Personally, I think Mennonites should give away all their possessions.

What you can do

For information about how you can support or otherwise be involved in overseas mission work, contact the Commission on Overseas Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

The legacy of witness

Chinese Christians express thanks for the work of Mennonite mission workers in the past.

Carla Reimer

A single light bulb illuminates the sanctuary of the Gospel Church, a former Mennonite mission church in Puyang, China. Many of the church windows are broken and covered with plastic sheeting. There are no pews, only sawhorses.

But this doesn't stop Christians from gathering for the Sunday morning worship services, reported Todd Friesen in a Dec. 31, 1993, letter to China Educational Exchange. Friesen and Todd Hanson visited the congregation with two other CEE workers in mid-November 1993. Friesen and Hanson also visited a former Mennonite mission church in Daming.

Both churches are "flourishing," wrote Friesen, who teaches at the Beijing University of Science and Technology and is the CEE program coordinator.

Todd Friesen

The majority of the 500 people who attend Gospel Church are middle-aged or elderly farmers, wrote Friesen, noting that about 80 percent of them are female.

Gospel Church members found that their building was in need of serious repair after the government returned it to them in early 1993. They held their first worship service at the newly reopened building on Oct. 24, 1993.

"The high point was being with the people as they were reopening their church, seeing their excitement and enthusiasm. It was encouraging to see that their prayers had been answered, even though it took 20 to 30 years," said Hanson, who completed his CEE assignment in Jiujiang at the end of December 1993. Hanson and Jeanette, his wife, are living in Saskatchewan; they hope to return to China in July.

"I felt moved by the lives of the Christians we met. These people are examples to us of the meaning of costly discipleship," wrote Friesen, who is supported by the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church and Mennonite Central Committee.

"Most of the people had Bibles, many of which seemed heavily marked from previous study," said Friesen. Church elder Liu Shixian told him there was no shortage of Bibles in the Puyang area, since they are regularly sent from Nanjing's Amity Printing Press, then sold at the church.

Todd Hanson

Henry and Maria Brown, sponsored by what was then the General Conference Board of Missions, were the first Mennonites to live in Puyang, then known as Kaizhou. They arrived in 1911 and bought a parcel of land, where they built a chapel, dispensary and an elementary boarding school.

The Gospel Church, which had seating for 800, was built in 1917. Other institutions soon followed. Over 30 Mennonite missionaries served in the Puyang area from 1911-1941. Escalating violence during the war between China and Japan forced most of the missionaries to leave by the early 1940s.

At the Nov. 14, 1993, service, Gospel Church elder Wang Ji'an preached about devoting one's children to God's work. He spoke of Mary and how she had given up her son Jesus. "Many people tell me that their children have become business-people, even capitalists," he said, "but they fail to tell me whether their children are disciples of Christ."

At lunch after the service the church leaders, who are in their 60s and 70s, sang in English "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow," recalled Hanson, noting that one of the leaders had tears in his eyes as he sang.

Smallpox: "Everyone we met in Puyang spoke about the past Mennonite missionaries with great respect. ... Stories of E.G. Kaufman's struggle with smallpox, for example, ... were remembered with admiration," wrote Friesen. He added that Liu and Wang were proud that they had been baptized by Henry Brown. Church elder Zhang Baoshan recalled that his father had taught Chinese to Kaufman.

"There was no sign of the bitterness that had once existed among the Puyang Christians because the missionaries were so slow to give the Chinese authority and equal standing in the church," wrote Friesen. "Instead there was an openly expressed debt to these people for giving birth to the church that exists today."

There are 22 districts in Puyang County, and each has an officially recognized meeting place. Before 1949, Gospel Church leaders said, there were 1,000 Christians in the Puyang area. Today there are approximately 6,000 Christians—about 50 percent are baptized.

Used as a cinema: The members of the Three-Self Church in Daming were busy repairing and cleaning their building, which had been returned by the government in July 1993, wrote Friesen. The building had been used as a cinema in recent years and, as a result, its floor slopes from the back to the front.

The building was once home to the Qingjie Hui Mennonite Church. Mennonite churches in the Daming and Puyang regions all took their names from Henry Brown's given Chinese name: "Qingjie," which means pure.

Henry and Nellie Bartel were the first Mennonites to arrive in Daming, then known as Taming Fu, in 1901. Daming later became a mission station of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Liu Yuwen is the 26-year-old pastor of the Daming church. He graduated from the Yanjing Seminary in Beijing in 1988. Liu receives no income from the church; he relies on financial support from family members, who are farmers.

Liu told Friesen that he focuses on God's saving grace in his sermons as well as what it means to be a community of faith and how to establish a Christian environment at home.

According to Liu, there are two reasons people attend the Daming church. Some attend because they are suffering from health problems. They become believers when they hear the gospel and are healed. Others, who have attained a relatively comfortable standard of living, come because they still feel spiritually empty.

Today few people who attend the Three-Self Church are old enough to remember the Mennonite missionaries. However, Liu's grandfather graduated from the Mennonite Bible school in Daming.

The Daming area has 20 Christian meeting places with 4,000 attenders. Five hundred people were baptized at the Three-Self Church last summer.

Hanson noted that almost every church he has attended has been "absolutely packed. People show up 60 to 90 minutes in advance of the worship service. Many of them end up listening outside the church because there isn't enough room inside."

Beijing
CHINA
Puyang

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Church and state in China

If Christians in China want to worship together, they have to have more than a building. The building has to be legally registered with the Chinese government.

"Church registration has become a big headache. It has caused a lot of confusion," says Todd Hanson, who completed an assignment in Jiujiang with China Educational Exchange (CEE) at the end of December 1993 and now lives in Saskatchewan.

Hanson says it's confusing because some areas enforce this law, while others don't. "There are some churches that are meeting without the government stamp of approval. Other church buildings have not been returned by the government because they are being used, often as cinemas or factories."

He doesn't know whether the Christians in Puyang and Daming met illegally prior to the return of their property last year. All the churches in China were closed during the Cultural Revolution, which began in 1966.

"I couldn't talk with them about that so it is hard to say; it seemed like there were a lot of people [500] who were ready to be baptized soon after the Daming church was returned," says Hanson.

Political realities: The Chinese government began returning church property in 1979. "That these church buildings [in Puyang and Daming] were returned more than a decade after this happened in other cities says much about the political realities in this part of central China," wrote Todd Friesen in a Dec. 31, 1993, letter. He is a CEE worker in Beijing.

"While economic liberalization was obvious in both cities, it was clear that the official policy toward the church had only recently begun to change," he wrote.

Friesen and Hanson experienced this reality when they were interviewed for over an hour by three police officers in Daming about the reason for their visit.

"When the police officers heard that we were in Daming to visit a church, they asked us for our Christian identification cards," says Hanson. All baptized church members in China are required to carry these cards.

"We told them that our church didn't have these cards and they accepted this answer," he said, noting that some city governments are even using this requirement as a money-making venture.

Hanson, Friesen and CEE workers David and Esther Yoder Stenson were also accompanied by government and police officials to the Sunday morning worship service in Puyang.

Mao jackets: Economically, both Daming and Puyang are located in poor parts of central China. Most of the people are farmers. "The expressions that people used and the clothes they wore were popular 15 to 20 years ago. The street vendors were still selling Mao jackets," says Hanson. "My Chinese friends couldn't understand why I would want to visit such backward areas."

"Church leaders in both cities spoke with great caution and used a political lexicon that harked back to China a decade ago," wrote Friesen. "At the same time, they never made apologies for their faith, and their language was unabashedly Christian." *Carla Reimer*

A Chinese Christian tells stories of how Mennonite mission workers helped him years ago.

Daniel in the dragon's den

Esther Yoder Stenson

His English name is Daniel, and he is now 73 years old. My husband and I met him one afternoon when we went to check out the library at the Henan Agricultural University, where we teach. He was small and walked with a slight limp. But it was his friendly "good afternoon" that first caught our attention.

He showed us to the foreign language reading room, then took us to see the grand display of large clocks and wall murals. He seemed happy to talk to us and kept throwing in well-pronounced English words here and there. My curiosity aroused, I asked him where he had learned English.

At first he listed names of recent English teachers at the university and then, going chronologically backward, he named S.F. Pannabecker and Roland Brown, the son of Henry and Maria Brown.

Having just finished reading the book *Clear Shining After Rain* by Matilda Voth, I recognized those names as Mennonites who had worked in this province in the first part of this century. It was an exciting moment to find this living link to a past that I thought mostly existed in books.

When he indicated that he was born in Puyang, the city where General Conference Mennonite missionaries worked in the early 1900s, I asked whether he had known E.G. Kaufman. He nodded yes and began telling me lots of stories—how Kaufman had smallpox and taught many things at the church, and how Daniel had been loved by Kaufman.

Baptized: He continued, "They were with a group called Menno ... " and I asked, "Mennonite"? He nodded, and I said, "Oh, I'm Mennonite too." Then he said excitedly in English, "I am too," and indicated by motions that he had been baptized at the age of 16.

My Chinese, less than perfect, kept me from understanding all the stories he told that first time. But I kept going back to see him at the library, where he is night watchman, and, bit by bit, I pieced together his story.

In his accounts, he always comes back to Henry and Maria Brown, the first Mennonite missionaries in that area, and how they cared for him as a son. His own father died when he was an infant. He became close friends with their son, Roland, and spent time with Maria Brown in Bible instruction.

He recounted how when the Browns had to leave China because of the Japanese invasion and ensuing turmoil, they offered to pay his way to leave with them. But as he said, "I was married for only two weeks, and what could I do?"

He also talked about his mother being a faithful, itinerant Bible evangelist for 20 years, and how he accompanied her sometimes.

He knew Stephen Wang and James Liu, who both studied at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., from 1930-32. When they returned to China, they became teachers at Hua Mei Middle School, which was started by Mennonites. Daniel was one of their students at that time.

When I told him there were now a number of Mennonites teaching English in various places in China, he said, "Thanks be to God. Then we are all brothers and sisters."

I said a heartfelt "yes" and gave thanks to God for the faithful witnesses who came here amid great difficulty, and planted seeds that are still alive today.

Esther Yoder Stenson is a China Educational Exchange (CEE) worker at the Henan Agricultural University in Zhengzhou, China, where she teaches English. She receives support from the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions. She wrote this article in October 1993.

Letters

Tackling social issues

As a family practitioner I greatly appreciated your Dec. 28, 1993, article, "Facing the Black Hole." I would request your permission to photocopy it for some of my depressed patients. I really appreciate your policy of tackling the difficult social issues of our time in your magazine. *D.M. Thiessen, Red Deer, Alta.*

'Race' is a myth

I want to thank *The Mennonite* for its ongoing dedication to the problems of prejudice, discrimination and racism that plague our society. *The Mennonite* is taking the right approach by talking about it.

One thing that all of us tend to overlook as we debate racism is this: "Race" is a myth, not a fact. Race cannot be proven. I can prove my nationality, I can prove my language, and I can show you my culture, but I cannot prove my race. Race continues to exist because we continue to use the word. We throw this word around a lot, but what is race? [The concept of] race was started in the 1800s by a German scientist as a means of classifying humans into species, similar to how we classify animals. With the idea of race came the notion of white supremacy. Race has continued to be promoted by Europeans as a means of proving white supremacy and as a basis for discouraging "race-mixing" in the hopes of keeping the white race pure.

Mennonite
BARRIERS OF RACISM

Here is the problem: Humans are far too complex to be classified like animals. Humans have always mixed, and we are all one species able to reproduce with one another. And all of us are made in the image of God. The Ainu people of Japan and the Aborigines of Australia have baffled scientists for years because they don't fit into a racial group.

In our country, when a white person has a child with a person of color the child is expected to racially identify with the race of the parent lower in the racial hierarchy. Once again this is an attempt to keep the white race pure. Isn't it a fundamental right of every person to identify themselves as they choose? Not for everyone in our society.

We must stop believing in the dangerous myth of race. We must become "race-free." Then we will be taking the first step down the path of true equality that Jesus Christ laid out for us. *Martha Bragg, Minneapolis, Minn.*

Ideas your church can try

Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, Kan., uses a period of time—maybe 15 minutes—before the worship service to learn new songs from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*.

From our leaders

Vern Preheim

We now have a shortage of pastors in the General Conference Mennonite Church. Approximately 60 GCMC congregations in Canada and the United States are looking for pastors. Some have been looking for several years. Normally at the beginning of a year, about 50 pastoral searches are in process.

Many small churches cannot pay a full-time salary. They find it difficult to obtain a pastor. Large churches with multiple staff often have trouble finding a pastor. Why the shortage? Here are a few reasons:

1. Pastoral ministry is demanding and complex. For many, pastoral ministry is not an attractive vocational choice.

2. More pastors are leaving ministry before retirement than earlier. When it is time for the pastor to "move on," changing locations is often not an acceptable option because of the spouse's career or other family reasons, so the pastor takes other employment in the community.

3. Some capable, gifted women are available for ministry, but many congregations are not willing to call a woman pastor.

What can we do about the pastor shortage? Here are suggestions:

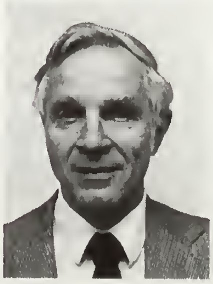
1. Make the need for pastors a prayer concern. All of us can pray, whether or not our congregation is looking for a pastor.

2. Identify individuals of all ages with pastoring gifts and encourage them to consider ministry. Some congregations may need to call pastors from within their own membership.

3. More congregations should consider women candidates when looking for a pastor.

4. Congregations should do everything possible to make pastoral ministry a good experience for those now serving so that they will stay in ministry longer and others will be attracted to ministry as a vocation.

5. Conferences could do more to make the system work well. Help make good matches between pastors available and congregations searching. Provide good support systems for pastors and thus help prevent unnecessary exits from ministry.



Healthy congregations and conferences depend in a large measure on the pastoral leadership at the congregational level.

Vern Preheim is general secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Fiscal health

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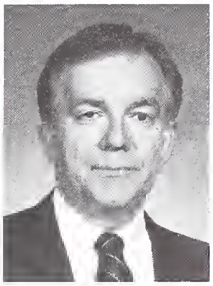
How your family can live on one income

8 ways families can reduce expenses and find more enjoyment in life

J.B. Miller



J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Is it possible for the average family in the United States or Canada to live on one income?

While many couples feel it would be impossible, single-parent households know it can be done, although it may be difficult and require creativity. The surprising result is that some families find they come out basically even financially when living on one income. Families with two incomes often spend a large percentage of one income in such things as child care, housekeeping, eating out, microwavable food and the other things we need to save time when both adults are working. Living on one income often requires more conservative spending patterns, resulting in more money being saved for retirement.

In some cases both people enjoy their work and seek employment for personal fulfillment. But in situations when one parent would prefer to stay at home*, consider the fact that a 40-hour work week may actually require 60 hours of your time when factoring in travel time, time to take the kids to day care and time "decompressing" after work. When thinking of it in these terms, the per-hour compensation may not look as attractive. It may look even less attractive when considering the added expense of child care, extra wardrobe and commuting.

The tendency is to look at the second income as adding to discretionary income when much of it may actually be used in such a way that often little is left for savings or charity. Here are some ideas that others have found helpful when streamlining from two incomes to one:

1 Visit your local library. Take advantage of all the books, videos, tapes, compact discs and even art that is available free of charge. Our local library allows you to check out paintings that can be used to decorate your home. Of course there are limits as to how long you can keep the paintings, but it's a great alternative to new art for the wall. If you must buy a book, try a used bookstore.

2 Review your grocery list. • Buy in bulk, but don't always assume that the cheapest place to shop for groceries is at the wholesale warehouses. When you comparison shop, you will note that some food at the warehouses is actually more expensive than at the local grocery store.

- Vary your breakfast food. Serve hot cereal such as oatmeal in the winter. Hot cereals are significantly less expensive than packaged cold cereals.
- Stay away from prepackaged prepared foods, including microwave popcorn, an expensive luxury compared with bulk popcorn.

3 Find a good second-hand clothing store, especially for children. Better yet, talk to people in your community who might have children six months older than yours, and see if you might purchase their clothes once their children have outgrown them.

4 Buy used furniture. Watch the newspaper for estate auctions and other household sales. You can often uncover quality furniture at significant savings. Learn to upholster your own furniture. Many local adult education programs include classes that teach such skills.

5 Reduce the number of times you eat out. Invite friends in for an evening potluck rather than eating out. The fellowship and the food will both be better.

6 Look for free entertainment. Parks, government buildings and museums are often significantly cheaper than commercial amusement parks.

7 Consider establishing a family budget. I know this sounds boring, but most people find a budget helps them meet their financial goals, something that is often impossible or difficult to achieve.

> The tendency is to look at a second income as adding to discretionary income when much of it may actually be used in such a way that often little is left for savings or charity.

8 Make your own gifts. One of the most appreciated Christmas gifts I received this year was two home-prepared meals I could place in the freezer and use later. This is a great gift for people on the go.

If you are considering the possibility of living on one income while now you're "enjoying" two, sit down, see how much that second job is really costing you, how much it truly is adding to your income, and decide if you might not want to try the alternative—one income.

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*While a single income may mean only one person working outside the home, an alternative may be for each person to work half time or some other combination to equal one full-time position.

Profile

A Mennonite by accident

If Alberto Muñoz's family had not rented a house from the Mennonite church in Colombia, he likely wouldn't be a Mennonite today.

Larry Penner

If Alberto Muñoz's grandmother hadn't heard about a house for rent, Alberto might be attending a Catholic church in Bogotá or a Baptist church in New York City.

When Alberto's mother, Rosario, a Catholic, married his father, Alberto Sr., a Baptist, the couple needed a new home. Their grandmother had heard that the Iglesia Central Menonita in Bogotá wanted to rent out part of its facilities.

After some checking, the Muñozes moved in. Since the couple hadn't found a church, and the Mennonite church was accessible, they went there. Twenty-one years later, Alberto is a graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., a board member of the Commission on Overseas Mission and a convinced Mennonite.

He grew up in the Mennonite church in Bogotá. "They became our best family friends," he says. While his family lived in Bogotá, Alberto Sr. drove a bus, and Rosario did "a little of everything," from housework to selling ice cream. Alberto says that if his grandmother hadn't heard about the house at the Mennonite church building he most likely wouldn't be Mennonite. But he'd still be in a church. "To have a spiritual life, to nurture it, was very important to both my parents," he says.

In 1980, Alberto's father came to the United States. He'd been thinking about it for some time; his sister had already moved to New York City. Antonio Arevalo, their minister at Iglesia Menonita Central, had moved to Dallas, so Alberto's father decided to move there, too. Five years later he brought the rest of the family, when Alberto was 16.

The transition wasn't difficult for him then; "not as bad as Bethel," he says. "Dallas was different, but the people were not as different as the environment was. … I had my family there and we had each other. People we met were like us; they were going through the same things."

Military conscription: Like Mennonites around the world, the Muñoz family migrated to escape military conscription. In Colombia everyone is conscripted, but Alberto's father didn't want him to go. His decision had to do with Mennonite teachings but also was a part of their family tradition, Alberto says. He traces his family's pacifist sentiments back to his great-grandfather, who brought his grandfather to Colombia to escape conscription in Spain's civil war. Alberto's father was now doing the same for his son.

It was the year he came to Bethel that culture shock hit. "It was the first time I ever realized I was in the United States for real," he says. "In Texas, my friends and others all spoke Spanish. At Bethel everyone was American."

He had been a Mennonite his whole life, but now he felt like an outsider. "I'm Mennonite, but I didn't know how to play the Mennonite game," he says. "[The Mennonite community here] tends to seem like a closed society, and it takes a lot of work to get into it." During his first semester he thought about dropping out but decided to stick it out and now says he feels at home. "Knowing the culture you feel a bit more part of the family."

Alberto attributes the difference he sees between the Mennonites here and those in Colombia to the histories of the two groups. "Colombia felt more open to everybody. With mission there's always new people coming all the time. The church here has a long history, and there aren't as many new people coming into the church."

He sees that history impacting beliefs as well. "In Colombia there was an emphasis on peace and justice and pacifism." He acknowledges the importance of pacifism to the church here but says, "It's easier to talk about peace in North Newton, Kan., where you don't see a war, you don't see guerrilla attacks, you don't see people dying. … It's talking about the same thing, but there [in Colombia] it's more urgent."

> "It's easier to talk about peace in North Newton, Kan., where you don't see a war … you don't see people dying."
>
> *Alberto Muñoz*

Alberto has thought a lot about whether he will return to Colombia. "That's a hard question," he says and pauses. "You know, I've thought about that a lot. I feel I owe a lot to the United States."

Alberto would like to return to Texas someday, somewhere closer to family. "I'd like to work with migrant workers," he says. "There's a real need there. … But I'd also like to go back to Colombia and do service work."

At present he is doing voluntary service in Washington for Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church.

Larry Penner is assistant editor of The Mennonite.

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- no 1

MCC contact

" Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding"
Romans 14:19.

Pursue Peace

MCC 1993 ANNUAL REPORT

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Cover photo: Syrian youth celebrates the Festival of the 10 Bridesmaids, a festival held each year during Easter week in Syria to remind Christians to be ready for Christ's return.

1993 in review

Pursuing peace in the world's villages, slums and backroads was Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) focus in 1993. "We believe it is at the grassroots — not in the corridors of power — where Jesus is seen 'with the least of these,' the hungry, the thirsty, stranger, illiterate and suffering," says John A. Lapp, MCC executive secretary.

MCC is the service, development and relief agency of North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches; more than 900 MCC workers serve in 54 countries in community development, education, health, food production, administration and peace and reconciliation work.

MCC workers and partners were heartened by 1993's steps toward peace — September's handshake, for example, between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and November's signing of an interim constitution that granted black and white South Africans equal rights for the first time in more than 300 years.

Yet many partners and workers entered 1994 with the aftertaste of 1993 unrest. Violence was eroding North America's cities. Zairians, including some 100,000 Mennonites, were struggling to find food due to out-of-control inflation, violence and political corruption.

Haitians were exhausted by the political instability of a repressive military regime and economic hardships caused by international embargo. And the world's early optimism about the ability of international troops to enforce peace in Somalia had worn thin by year-end; in fact the longstanding, intractable obstacles to peace loomed ever large.

These world conflicts and many more underscored the importance of finding long-term peaceful resolutions to war. At its February 1993 annual meeting, MCC adopted a new peace statement that reflected changes in the church and world since the last statement in 1950. "We have learned that violence can be done not only in warfare but also through economic structures," the statements reads. "We have come to realize that violence can reach into our churches and homes."

MCC also supported peacemaking activity in various countries. For nearly five months, more than 250 clan elders in northwest Somalia sat, talked and drank innumerable cups of tea in a school in Borama. At the end of these meetings, partially supported by MCC, the elders reached a consensus on how to govern northwest Somalia and how to resolve conflicts among their five clans.

Churches in Sudan worked for peace with MCC support. About 1.3 million people have died in Sudan, the direct or indirect result of that country's 10-year civil war.

In Croatia at an MCC-sponsored conference, Catholic, Protestant and Serbian-Orthodox church leaders traded stories of people working for peace. "They also discovered to their great joy that they were still friends, despite the formidable propaganda, half-truths and manipulation fueling this conflict," wrote Hansulrich Gerber, MCC Europe secretary.

In Ireland, John Paul Lederach, MCC international conciliation specialist, encouraged a gathering of 80 to work for peace at the grassroots and with church, business and nongovernmental leaders. "People tend to think of peacekeeping as negotiations among top-level leaders seated at a table. But what happens at the middle level and grassroots is more important for a lasting peace."

In Mozambique an MCC child psychiatrist helped children recover from war's trauma and led peace seminars for church members. In Canada MCC began work with five Mennonite conferences to produce Sunday school curriculum for youth on peace.

"In 1993 MCC U.S. resolved to play a more active role in eliminating the problems of individual and institutional racism. We want churches to experience the joy that comes in a fellowship where there is 'neither Jew nor Greek.... bond nor free... (Galatians 3:28),'" noted Lynette Y. Meck, MCC U.S. executive secretary

Adrian Denny, center, found his "voice" through a fund raising event by members of Winnipeg's MCC SALT (Serving and Learning Together) unit. The unit, sponsored by the Aberdeen Evangelical Mennonite Church, raised $1,600 at a spaghetti supper so Denny could buy an $8,000 computerized voice-box to replace his harder-to-use Bliss symbol board. SALT is a one-year MCC program for young people ages 17 to 20 who serve in various assignments and study the Bible.

We strive to share
with all people the good news that the grace of God in Jesus Christ, experienced in forgiveness and discipleship, changes lives and enables us to be peacemakers.
from 1993 Peace Statement

1993 saw 15 MCC-funded rural health clinics in Iran open their doors. And MCC sent 13,851 school kits to children in Iraq where many families could not afford food, much less school supplies, due to international sanctions banning all imports but food and medicine.

In 1993 MCC did its usual development work. Ninety-six MCC teachers in 26 countries, for example, helped bolster education for children and adults in formal and nonformal settings.

MCC also, as before, ministered to people who were hungry, thirsty, homeless or suffering due to natural disasters. People in southern Africa planted fields in 1993 with MCC-given seeds after drought had threatened millions with starvation. In addition, MCC, with Canadian Foodgrains Bank, shipped tons of corn and beans to southern Africa. This outside support and local initiative together fed some 120,000 people in Zambia alone.

Mennonite Disaster Service set up flood relief centers in three states in the U.S. Midwest where more than three months of flooding left 50 dead, 70,000 homeless and 20 million acres of farmland flooded or too wet to plant.

Those whom MCC workers intended to serve in North America and overseas — folks traditionally seen as recipients of charity — proved charitable in 1993 as before. They interpreted local languages, cultures and customs to MCC newcomers. They shared their homes, families and lives with workers, teaching, among other things, unforgettable lessons in hospitality.

James Logan, who directs MCC's community ministries in the United States, says MCC's partner agencies remind him of the "church in Smyrna whom John referred to in Rev. 2:9-11: 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich)...Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life.' These U.S. agencies, with few resources, empower the powerless and create communities based on the rock of Christ's love."

In 1993, as in the preceding 72 years, MCC workers aimed to be faithful and shared food, clothing and shelter with people in need. They also learned life-changing lessons from these new-found friends, thanks to generous Christians in North America, Europe, Latin America and Asia who, because they desired to serve God and others, shared with MCC.

••• **Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker**
MCC Communications

Frank Friesen and Peter Kroeker, Winnipeg, Man., hold a sample of the four-color printing performed on an AB Dick in the former Soviet Union. These two men went to Russia to help with the printing presses there. They came back amazed at good work printers there were producing using dated materials and basic equipment.

MCC program expanded in Russia in 1993. Ben and Erna Falk, of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., went to Siberia to help residents market dairy, meat and other food products; this couple from Virgil (Ont.) Mennonite Brethren Church brought the number of MCC workers in Russia to eight. Aspiring entrepreneurs in Moscow received a financial boost from a joint endeavor of MCC, Mennonite Economic Development Associates and the Moscow-based Association of Christians in Business.

Russia and the Ukraine received the lion's share of MCC material resources in 1993: 1,800 food boxes, seed corn, Bible commentaries, medicines, wheelchairs, books, office equipment, winter coats and 33 metric tons of canned beef.

What will 1994 hold for this Zairian family and others?

Continuing political instability, stemming from President Mobutu Sese Seko's refusal to loosen his grip on power, caused incredible hardship in 1993. Food prices shot up more than 5,000 percent; unemployment was staggeringly high. "God works miracles. We do not know what God has in store for us but God will not abandon us in misery," said one Mennonite pastor.

We will pray
for and witness
to those in
authority
over our
countries.
from 1993 Peace Statement

We will resist
evil and
oppression
in the
nonviolent
spirit
of Jesus.
from 1993 Peace Statement

Blessed are the peacemakers: Peacemaking as the driving force for MCC

In 1944 J. Lawrence Burkholder, then a young Mennonite pastor, volunteered to go to China for MCC. Although exempt from the draft, Burkholder felt the tension of being a nonresistant Mennonite in a highly militarized society. Burkholder was searching for a "moral alternative" to war. "The prospect of helping to feed and clothe starving and freezing people," he noted, "appealed to my need for an honorable Christian alternative to war that would include a measure of drama, danger, adventure and heroic sacrifice."

During World War I those same sentiments caused dozens of American and Canadian Mennonites to look for an alternative to military service. After numerous imprisonments some of these conscientious objectors began to do "peace service" with the American Friends Service Committee and Near East Relief. These same individuals appealed to the leaders of the Mennonite conferences to form an inter-Mennonite mission and service program that would include "an aggressive peace program...a program of witness to the state against military training and the imprisonment of conscientious objectors, a relief and service organization ready to deal effectively with emergencies, such as wars and natural disasters."

MCC, established in 1920, was from its beginning a statement. The Mennonite movement, at that time nearly 400 years old, decided to more formally express its profound convictions that "peace is the will of God." A 1950s history of MCC expressed this rootedness clearly:

> MCC is an organization that spontaneously grew out of the desire of the Mennonite peoplehood to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and to testify by loving service to the Gospel of peace and love... Relief and peace services were an integral part of the Mennonite witness and way of life in the world.... They (Mennonites and Brethren in Christ) were moved to be energetic in showing mercy and love toward enemies as well as toward all humankind.

From the 1920s and 1940s to now, everything MCC has done expresses this fundamental conviction. In our 1991 statement of mission we say our primary concern is "to demonstrate God's love through committed women and men who work among people suffering from poverty, conflict, oppression and natural causes.... MCC strives for peace, justice and dignity of all people by sharing our experiences, resources and faith in Jesus Christ."

More than 20 years ago I asked former executive secretary Orie O. Miller what Scriptures he used as a basis for MCC work. He immediately cited the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5) and the Apostle Paul's admonitions in Romans 12, "if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also...if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also a second mile, feed the enemy and in so doing overcome evil with good." MCC takes the teaching of Jesus seriously and in so doing is a "moral alternative" to the violence in our world.

We are not always as clear as we should be as to how God's compassion undergirds all we do. Our involvements are not only a desire to do something; more importantly they express who we are and want to be. MCC can be a doing organization because the community we represent and the workers who serve have made peace integral to their very being.

Peacemaking **is finally the first fruits of God's new creation.**

It is always a temptation to reduce peacemaking to a political activity. While Jesus was an intensely political figure, he nonetheless approached the human condition through the synagogue rather than through the state-house, from the peripheral province of Galilee rather than from the power center of Jerusalem or Rome. Logically one would work for peace with the holders of power but the experience of Christ and the church through history suggests such an approach is stronger when our peace witness grows out of a vital faith community.

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MCC from its beginnings has emphasized the concrete deed. Robert Coles, the distinguished Christian psychiatrist, observes that Jesus "spent his short time with us doing these everyday acts of charity, offering these small gestures, emphasizing the importance of the concrete deed." For MCC the can of meat, garden hoe, blanket, school or health kit are expressions of a peaceable people as well as responses to suffering.

We believe Christ calls us to minister to those with no status in the world. They are often in refugee camps or in remote villages in areas of conflict. MCC's first work was in a revolutionary situation in South Russia. Today conflict tears apart Haiti, Zaire, Sudan, Somalia and numerous locations in the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

Providing food, water and shelter fulfills God's intention that all people discover shalom. But shalom also includes community structures and organizations that make possible sustainable life. Ever since MCC sent 50 Fordson tractors to Russia in 1921, we have seen peacemaking as development. Long before Pope Paul VI, Mennonites understood "development to be a new word for peace." Building houses and schools, training teachers and midwives, providing new kinds of seeds and appropriate technologies, encouraging new forms of business enterprise and creating jobs are essential if communities are going to be satisfying places to live.

Peaceable communities are the building blocks of a peaceable world.

Shalom also includes understanding the meaning of life. We believe life's ultimate meaning is found in the God who was "in Christ reconciling the world." This knowledge and belief, along with deep roots in a faith community, make it possible for MCC workers to work for peace and to resist the temptation to join one side or another when communities are being torn apart.

Susan Classen and other workers in El Salvador have deeply felt war's agony and the temptation to join one side or another. "Peacemakers are called to be rocks in the whirlpool of violence. We're called to stand firm, 'the violence stops here,'" Susan observes.

Because peace has been so essential to the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ sense of obedience to God's call, the churches asked MCC to administer alternative service programs in the United States and to address government as appropriate in Ottawa and Washington. The work of our Peace and Justice Ministries, Peace Office and Peace and Social Concerns program has been an important vehicle for articulating our theology of peace and extending our peace witness.

During MCC's nearly 75 years, peace has indeed been a driving force. The arena of peace concerns and witness has grown as we discover our own involvements in structures that create much of the world's violence. We now know that if we are to "overcome evil with good," we must promote new strategies for making peace.

To work for peace is not simply to ameliorate—but also transform—the situation.

Thus MCC has made mediation and conciliation higher priorities in our work during the past decade. We have struggled to find an appropriate niche outside the established diplomatic process. In Somalia we focused on conciliation beginning with the clan elders rather than the warlords. Conciliation Services works with church, regional and family disputes.

Peace and peacemaking are not mere ethical veneers for MCC, rather they are the fruit of deeply held biblical convictions. While we have much to learn in our obedience, we do strive in the words of Wilbert Shenk, to demonstrate "the fruit of Messianic renewal."

"The great innovation in the 20th century (Anabaptist heritage) has been the discovery of 'service' as a consequence of the Historic Peace Churches' opposition to military service," Shenk notes.

Last spring MCC workers Gerald and Sara Shenk returned to the former Yugoslavia where they lived and worked for more than a decade. As they sought out that creative minority who steadfastly refused to join the violence, Gerald sensed again the meaning of the Good News in our time: "peace-making, truth-telling, a passion for justice." That is what it means for MCC to work for peace "In the Name of Christ."

•••**John A. Lapp**
MCC Executive Secretary

We submit ourselves
to the study of Scripture,
the giving and receiving
of counsel, and the
practice of prayer,
as ways to receive
the gift of God's peace.
from 1993 Peace Statement

Healing for a South African community

Bhambayi, a shantytown in South Africa and the scene of ongoing political violence, saw more than 250 deaths in 1993.

In September, in an effort to restore peace, a small group of women from various churches marched into Bhambayi to hold a prayer meeting. They knelt and prayed in an area occupied by the "reds" and then knelt again near a clinic that belonged to the "greens."

Then a miracle happened. As the women sang hymns and prayed, hundreds of people from opposing sides poured onto the streets. Former enemies wept as they greeted and hugged each other. Later they tested their peace with a soccer match in a lot located between their two areas of town; the "reds" and "greens" continued to chat amicably with each other.

Peace monitors and security force members were stunned at the transformation; Richard Steele and Anne McKay, long involved with mediation work in the community, said it felt as if "spring had finally come to South Africa."

Violence in South Africa killed some 100 people weekly in 1993. Youth there have grown up surrounded by violence. Rather than rolling tires, for example, as young boys in Lesotho do, they were burning enemies in that infamous stack of rubber tires called a "necklace."

MCC agriculture and health work

MCC workers helped others grow crops and raise animals so they need not depend on relief food. Some 39 agriculturists served in 13 countries in 1993, supporting local farmers who wanted to improve their rice, wheat, olive, fruit, pepper, tomato, date palm, peanut, bean, vegetable and soybean harvests. They also helped farm families better tend their fish, rabbits, sheep, goats, bees, water buffalo, oxen and cows.

In Bangladesh Bodera Nesa enjoyed a life she did not dream possible four years ago when her husband left her and their five children. Without land to cultivate, she and her children often went hungry; they survived by selling parboiled rice in the market.

MCC taught Bodera Nesa to vaccinate chickens against Newcastle disease that kills 35 percent of the chickens there; now she travels from village to village vaccinating about 1,400 hens each month, work that has earned her respect and the title "animal doctor." Her income buys the family's daily food and augments her husband's fish retailing business; he returned to the family a year ago.

In Vietnam a rural savings and credit program enabled 1,000 farm families to fatten pigs and other animals to sell for a profit. Traditionally these families who live at subsistence levels were refused loans because they lacked collateral. Now, with the MCC program off to a good start, the local bank has also begun giving non-collateral loans.

Nine fruit growers in New Brunswick formed a business to do together what they could not do alone—successfully market small fruits. Each member of the MCC-supported business plants half an acre of currants, gooseberries, grapes, elderberries and saskatoons. By pooling their resources they are able to contract accounting, marketing and distribution services — "things they could never afford to do by themselves," says Brian Elliot, MCC Maritimes director.

Tanzanian water tank

Helping villagers irrigate fields and plots also put more food on tables and in markets. People in Bolivia, Brazil, Nigeria, Cambodia and Burkina Faso, for example, had more water for their crops in 1993 because they dug new wells and cisterns, water conservation techniques learned from MCC.

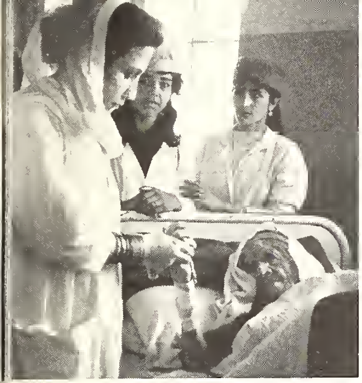
Seventy Bedouin families in Jordan received permission to improve a cistern built in 7000 B.C. near Petra, a well-known archaeological site. The cistern has proved a reliable source of water for centuries but its water is easily polluted and not readily accessible. The Bedouin cleaned the cistern, installed a pipe and faucet near the bottom, built watering troughs, cleaned the channels feeding rainwater into the cistern and replastered it.

MCC also created new jobs or helped people obtain needed job skills so families could afford to buy food. Twenty-nine job-seekers in Alberta learned auto mechanics or metalworking through an MCC Alberta Employment Development Program. Of the 24 people who graduated from the 10-month program in February, all but three have found work. "It's hard for people, especially immigrants and refugees, to break into this area of work," says program coordinator Walter Hossli. "Employers are often reluctant to take unskilled people into apprenticeship programs because of the costs involved. This training project gives them a head start in the job market."

In 1993 MCC had 59 health workers in 20 countries who treated ill people and worked to prevent illnesses by such methods as immunizing children.

"When I look back on my time in Uganda, the health clinic is the project I feel best about," noted Christine Rowe Miller, of South Bend, Ind., who went to northern Uganda in 1990 to train church development workers in basic health and medical skills. For three years, Rowe Miller says, she resisted the urge to take over the faltering clinic. "I could have painted it,

Rose tends the rice roasting ovens at Kagiowosa Menonin, a community owned and operated business supported by MCC. James Kroeker, originally from Winkler, Man., serves there.



Nurses in Kabul,Afghanistan, hospital bandage a patient's arm. In 1993 MCC shipped medicines, intravenous fluids, surgical instruments and other medical supplies valued at $20,825 Cdn./ $16,600 U.S. for this and other Kabul hospitals.

We will contribute
to the relief of human need and suffering by giving of ourselves and our resources.
from 1993 Peace Statement

equipped it with shiny, new equipment and treated patients. But then it would have become 'Kristi's clinic.'" Instead she worked behind the scenes training staff to keep records, maintain inventory and link up with a national drug distribution program, among other things. Now the bustling clinic treats 75 to 150 — instead of 30 — patients daily. Rowe Miller is a member of Living Hope Fellowship in Ithaca, N.Y., and is associated with Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind.

MCC worker Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi, of Orrville, Ohio, harvests squash seeds with members of a farmer's group in Zaire.

Begum Noorjahan makes paper in a MCC-started job creation project in Feni, Bangladesh. This handmade paper is sold at most SELFHELP Crafts of the World stores in North America. SELFHELP Crafts of the World, an MCC job creation program, provided the equivalent of 12,000 full-time jobs for crafts-people in 35 countries.

Partners who inspire

"It is right that we should thank God for you, because your faith increases mightily, and the love that you have for all grows even greater" (2 Thess. 1:3).

MCC would not exist without its partners — those North Americans who support MCC and those whom workers serve. Halloween 1993 found children at the Goshen (Ind.) College kindergarten going around the neighborhood singing and asking for donations for purchasing supplies for MCC school kits, an alternative to the usual "trick or treating."

Iowa Mennonite School let 152 rambunctious teens loose one day in November to tear out rotted drywall and mud-caked carpets, shovel muck off floors, haul ruined furniture to dumpsters and hose down the gutted remains of 25 homes damaged by the summer floods.

It was a smashing success, said Wilbur Litwiller, Mennonite Disaster Service director in Iowa. Homeowners were awestruck by the students' eagerness to pitch in; the students were invigorated by the camaraderie they experienced and the visible difference their efforts made.

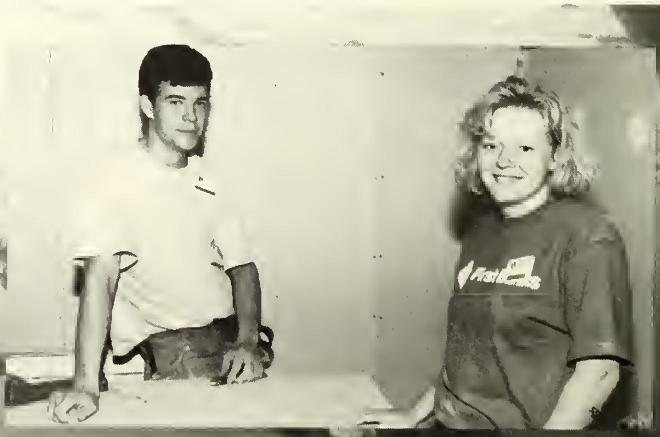
In Ephrata, Pa., John Groff, Ben Burkholder and other church folk opened a store that was kind to God's good earth, to pocketbooks and to people in need. This new Re-uzit Home Supply store sells repaired furniture and appliances that would likely end up in a landfill. These items are priced and sold to people who cannot afford to purchase household goods at regular retail prices.

"I'd rather be fixing a rocking chair than sitting in one," said Burkholder, member of the store's management committee. Proceeds from the store go to MCC's ministry.

While most MCC heroes are unsung, Elizabeth Zuercher and Esther Pankratz, sisters in Kansas, made the *Wichita (Kan.) Eagle* with the story of how they spend each Tuesday at the MCC Material Resource Center in Newton. Esther, 90, has been working at the center since 1970; she recruited her 82-year-old sister when Zuercher's husband died in 1980. Over the years they have sorted truckloads of clothing. On Thursdays Esther volunteers at the Etcetera Shop, a Newton thrift shop also affiliated with MCC.

MCC workers were also inspired by the support and love of those with whom they work. Robert and Louise Henry, "like a hen gathering her chicks under her wings," have encouraged and nurtured hundreds of Jamaicans, wrote Henry Block of Saskatoon, Sask., MCC worker in Jamaica. Robert has served as president for the Jamaica Mennonite Church for seven years. He also pastors three rural churches, helps administer a school for deaf children and oversees a host of community development and social services projects. Louise proudly tells of the numerous foster children they have parented and of the church youth from poor homes, now nurses and teachers, whom they supported and encouraged.

The Henrys take literally biblical commands to give unstintingly to others, said Block, member of West Portal



Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers Kevin Penner, Sperling, Man., and Nancy Braun, Winkler, Man., measure and cut drywall in a flood-damaged basement in the U.S. Midwest.

We will strive
to show by our lives that war is an unacceptable way to solve human conflict.
from 1993 Peace Statement

Mennonite Brethren Church. "If someone needs to be taken to the hospital, the Henrys not only take them but also pay the bill if need be."

When violence against Hindus erupted in mostly-Muslim Bangladesh, an MCC staff person in Dhaka decided to work for peace. He called a meeting of other mosque leaders and together they agreed that no Hindus, Christians or Muslims should be attacked in the areas around their local mosque. They also agreed to preach against retaliation toward Hindus at their prayers the coming Friday. No one was hurt in that neighborhood.

In Bosnia Franciscan theologian Ivo Markovic's heroic actions for peace inspired as well. When tensions in his town erupted into open hostilities between Muslims and Croatians who had lived together amicably for generations, Markovic and other Franciscan leaders, in full habit, set out across the dividing lines. First, to their own Croatian people, they said, "We'll stand between the two lines; you'll have to shoot us first."

Then they approached the Muslim fighters, men they knew by name, who threatened to shoot them. Markovic replied, "Go ahead! Shame on you!"

Markovic and the other Franciscans crossed the line, found the Muslim religious leader and then with him gathered the military leaders. At one cafe table, three Christian and three Muslim religious leaders brainstormed ways to reduce the tensions. At another table, the military commanders agreed to a truce.

MCC U.S. Summer Service worker Richard Pannell, New York, N.Y., cools off with campers at Camp Deerpark, West Brookville, N.Y.

Mallte Alvarado, 12, helps dry peaches that were later sold at relief sales to raise money for MCC. Alvarado attends Templo La Paz in Orosi, Calif. In 1993 West Coast farmers donated fruit, which when dried and sold earned $44,586 Cdn./$35,000 U.S.

"Our vision is not only health and agriculture, but also to share our faith that God is with people, to give people a notion that everyone can be united as a whole."

•••Sima, agriculture educator, Haiti

Kanadier Mennonite children in Grassy Lake, Alta., read *Das Blatt.*

Mary Riley chats with Belay Tuccu, Phoenix, Ariz. Tuccu worked at the Glencroft Retirement Center in Phoenix as part of the MCC U.S. Summer Service Program.

NORTH AMERICA	546
Canada	269
United States	277

MIDDLE EAST
Egypt
Jordan
Lebanon
Syria
West Bank

Elsida Ashman, Jamaican woman whom MCC helped build a cistern.

LATIN AMERICA	130
Bolivia	31
Brazil	18
Colombia	1
Costa Rica	2
El Salvador	12
Guatemala	7
Haiti	15
Honduras	8
Jamaica	14
Mexico	9
Nicaragua	10
Paraguay	3

MCC U.S. worker Kathy Smith, N. Newton, Kan., assists second grader Nechelle Wright with her homework in Atlanta, Ga.

El Salvador

You are here

in each of these countries through MCC. This map shows countries where MCC workers served in 1993 and the number of workers in each of those countries on November 30, 1993. The number of MCC workers in each continent is found beside the continent name.

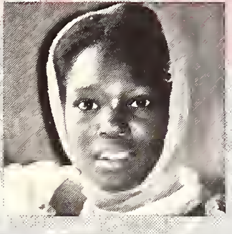
Haiti

Child at a refugee camp in Croatia. The German Mennonite Peace Committee sent frequent volunteer groups to camps in southern Croatia in 1993. They planned activities and provided emotional support to the refugees.

EUROPE	25
Croatia	2
Germany	8
Northern Ireland	1
Russia	8
Serbia	2
Switzerland	4

We will live
in relationships of love and mutual respect.
from 1993 Peace Statement

Sudan



AFRICA	119
Angola	2
Botswana	10
Burkina Faso	11
Chad	8
Ethiopia	4
Kenya	10
Lesotho	6
Mozambique	3
Nigeria	7
Somalia	2
South Africa	2
Sudan	9
Swaziland	5
Tanzania	6
Uganda	8
Zaire	9
Zambia	16
Zimbabwe	1

MCC worker Debbie Ainslie, Fly Creek, N.Y., visits with students at Ghandi Ahsram school in southern Bangladesh; students at that school are sponsored through MCC's Global Family Program.

ASIA	83
Bangladesh	22
Cambodia	10
China	11
India	2
Indonesia	14
Laos	3
Nepal	4
Philippines	6
Taiwan	2
Thailand	4
Vietnam	5

We seek to build up
the church as a community of love that welcomes people of every race, class, sex and nation, uniting even those who were enemies.
from 1993 Peace Statement

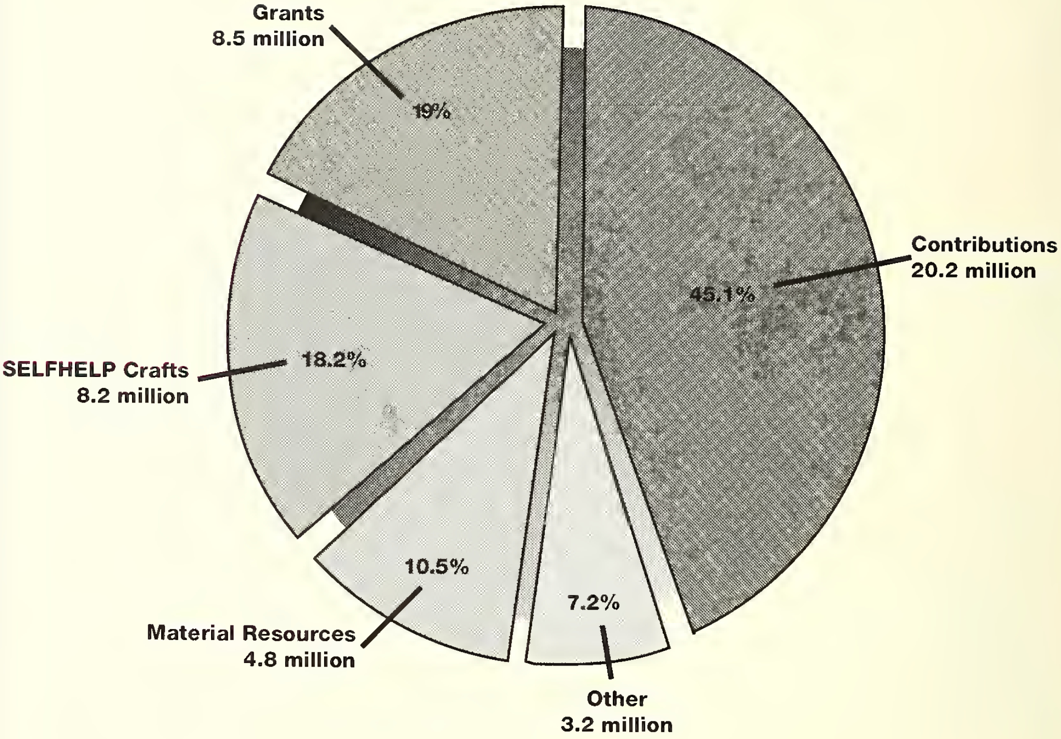
Your dollars at work

1993 consolidated income, expenses

These two pie charts show sources of income received by all MCC entities during their 1993 fiscal years and then how that income was used, again by all MCC entities during those fiscal years. Totals include Canadian provinces and U.S. regions. These figures, in U.S. dollars, are a composite of many financial statements with varying fiscal years. Audited financial statements are available from the MCC office nearest you.

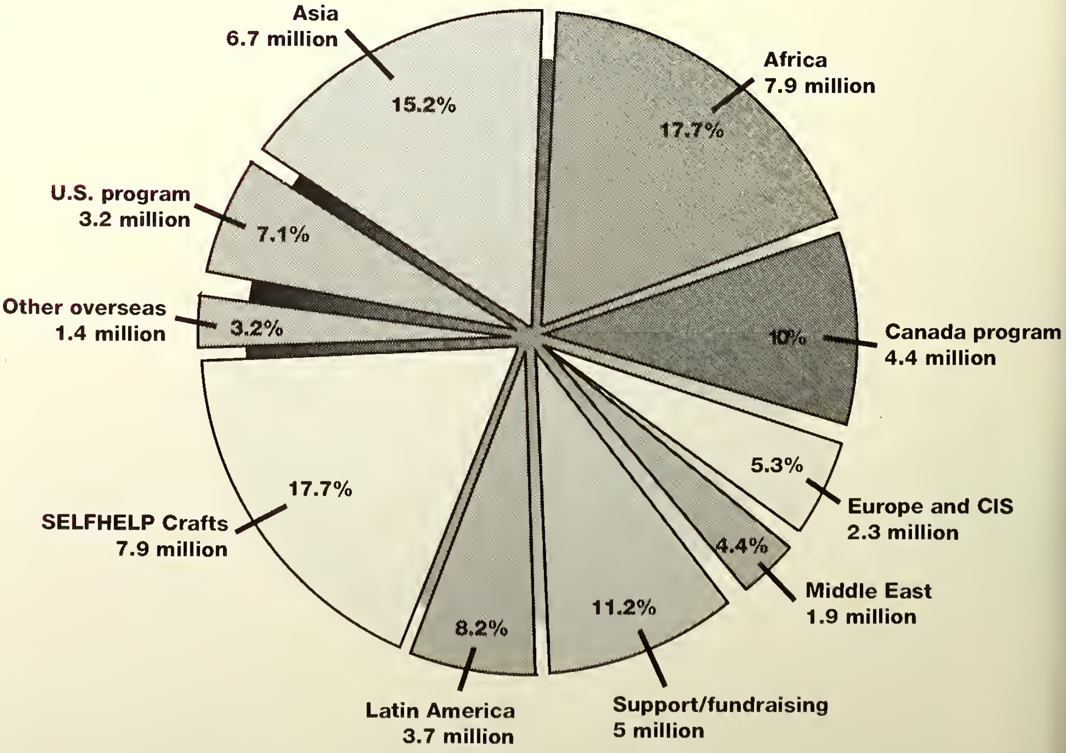
MCC Income, consolidated

$44.9 million U.S.



MCC Expenses, consolidated

$44.4 million U.S.



"Since I assumed the role of interim MCC Canada executive director, I have become increasingly aware of MCC's complexity and of the value of the staff who serve it so well. Above all, though, I continue to marvel at the love, good will and generosity of the supporting constituency. Without a doubt this is a miracle of faith and God's grace."

•••John Dyck, MCC Canada interim executive director

MCC International *

Income

U.S. contributions	7,667,952
Canada contributions*	3,603,786
Other contributions	269,708
Non-governmental grants	1,504,873
Governmental grants	2,665,371
SELFHELP Crafts	5,918,574
Investments earnings	591,064
Workers earning, fees and miscellaneous	531,749
Material resources in kind - U.S.	3,299,026
Material resources in kind - Canada*	4,377,183
TOTAL	30,429,286

Expenses

Agriculture & intergrated development	3,689,560
Emergency assistance	2,556,701
Economic & technical assistance	1,541,861
Education	2,204,024
Health	1,213,146
Social services	1,824,995
Religious & peace	2,248,062
SELFHELP Crafts	5,624,953
Supporting and fundraising activities	2,194,885
Material resources donated in kind	7,676,209
TOTAL	30,774,396
Net decrease in fund balance	(345,110)

** in U.S. dollars*

** report for 12 months ended November 30, 1993*

MCC U.S.**

Income

Contributions	3,560,418
Grant income	27,780
Community Ministries revenue	687,452
Peace and Justice Ministries revenue	52,550
Mennonite Health Services revenue	333,901
Regional revenue	123,785
Material resources donated in kind	75,629
Other income	5,686
TOTAL	4,867,201

Expenses

Community Ministries	1,323,815
Peace and Justice Ministries	596,992
Mennonite Disaster Service	426,853
Mennonite Health Service	416,216
Material resources donated in kind	75,629
Constituency Ministries	334,906
West Coast MCC	312,593
MCC Central States	378,766
MCC Great Lakes	166,101
MCC East Coast	284,352
Executive office	168,941
Support services	297,483
TOTAL	4,782,647
Net increase in fund balance	84,554

*** in U.S. dollars*

*** report for 12 months ended November 30, 1993*

MCC Canada***

Revenue

Contributions	
Constituency	6,941,179
Other	63,865
Grants	
CIDA	3,452,557
Other	511,414
Earned Income	
SELFHELP Crafts	2,629,601
Voluntary Service	84,099
Interest	144,167
Other	266,763
Material resources/food aid	
Contribution	1,974,464
Grants	6,594,531
Interest and other	(58,783)
TOTAL	22,603,857

Expenditures

Program	
Coordination	340,720
Development education	92,557
Eastern regions	407,301
Employment concerns	351,486
Kanadier concerns	370,715
Material resources/food aid	8,055,047
Mennonite Central Committee	8,133,792
Mental health disabilities	89,703
Native concerns	145,859
Other	174,776
Peace and social concerns	55,474
Refuge assistance	8,669
SELFHELP Crafts	2,656,495
Victim offender ministries	76,553
Women's concerns	42,502
General administration	816,319
TOTAL	21,817,968
Excess of revenue over expenditure	785,889
Equity at beginning of year	7,048,142
Equity at end of year	7,834,031

*** in Canadian dollars

*** report for 12 months ended August 31, 1993

> *We will work together*
> **to discern what**
> **God's reign means**
> **for our lifestyles**
> **and economic systems.**
>
> *from 1993 Peace Statement*

God at work among and through us

As you read this report, you will note that the MCC's work received strong financial support in 1993. Cash contributions to MCC totaled nearly $27 million Cdn./$20 million U.S. Gifts of material resources—school kits, blankets, food, medical supplies — added several million dollars more.

Children at the Pennsylvania Relief Sale record the latest number of pennies gathered in a "Penny Power" project for MCC.

The 12,014 metric tons of food shared through MCC included beans, corn, flour, meat, milk, oil, rice and wheat. This food will nourish 3.8 million people for a week, assuming that a pound, or 0.5 kilogram, of MCC food provides 2,000 calories. Canadian farmers donated more than 10,250 metric tons of grain—the third new annual record in a row.

SELFHELP Crafts sales created the equivalent of 12,000 full-time jobs by selling more than $10 million Cdn./$8 million U.S. worth of crafts in North America.

It is easy to overlook the generosity and commitment hidden in these figures. Countless volunteers worked at relief sales, thrift and SELFHELP Crafts shops and Houses Against Hunger; farmers donated grain, meat, milk and fruit. Congregations supported MCC workers with offerings and prayers.

In other words, this report does not record the resources MCC has *raised*; instead it acknowledges what Mennonites and Brethren in Christ people have *given* in faithfulness to Christ and in fidelity to brothers and sisters around the world.

The total given is but a drop in the bucket of worldwide need. But that does not discourage us! God will add the blessing.

> "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish...so is my word that goes out from my mouth. It will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace" (Isaiah 55:10-12).

We are grateful for the resources given in 1993. Most of all, we are grateful that God is at work among us and through us to accomplish God's purpose.

•••Berry Friesen
Director of Administration and Resources

We will work
to restore
the earth
God created.
from 1993 Peace Statement

Cash projects

•••

(April) Helping Mozambicans return home: 1993's tenuous peace gave 5.8 million Mozambicans courage to return home. "Compassion grants" see these brave souls through their first lean days at home. 35¢ Cdn./25¢ U.S. buys a loaf of bread. $1.35 Cdn./$1 U.S. buys maize for four people for two days. Include project number B627-70 with your contribution.

•••

(May) Training in peace and conflict resolution: The International Fellowship of Reconciliation in Uganda offers a three-week peacemaking and conflict resolution seminar for schools, churches and other institutions. $13.35 Cdn./$10 U.S. provides a day of training for a Ugandan; $67 Cdn./$50 U.S. transports and trains one person. $133 Cdn./$100 U.S. trains two Ugandans for a week. Include project number B644-70 with your contribution.

•••

(June) Developing Haitian church leaders: Relationships between Protestants and Catholics have eroded in Haiti. MCC will organize seminars for church leaders in one district to discuss biblical concepts of development and of ministering to the whole person as a way to restore dialogue. 89¢ Cdn./67¢ U.S. pays for one participant to attend a seminar. Include project number B918-70 with your contribution.

Material resource projects

•••

(April) Infant and children's clothing: MCC urgently needs infants' clothing and clothing for boys and girls, sizes 2 to 16, for Angola. Take your children's outgrown, slightly worn, outfits to the nearest MCC collection center. Or collect funds from your Sunday School class and together purchase children's clothing.

•••

(May) Health kits: MCC will send health kits to Laos, Nicaragua, Haiti, Jamaica and Egypt in 1994. To prepare a health kit, place these items in an 18- by 25-centimeter/8- by 10-inch drawstring bag: 1 toothbrush (adult small size), 1 tube toothpaste (168-196 g/6-7 oz. squeeze tube), 1 bar soap (112-140 g/4-5 oz.), 1 nail clipper with file, and 1 hand towel (larger than fingertip, bright or dark color).

•••

(June) New bar soap: In 1993 MCC sent about 30,000 bars of soap to Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and the West Bank. New bar soap, with labels please, is needed to replenish inventory so MCC can quickly respond to emergency requests.

Please include the following information with all contributions for Contact cash projects:

Name of project: ________________

Your name: ________________

Address: ________________

Conference or church affiliation: ________________

Project no. ________________

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street
PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500

MCC Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9

News

Missionaries in Moscow orchestrate gifts

Moscow (GCMC)—One hundred disabled children here received school kits at two Christmas concerts in early January, thanks to Mennonites, Baptists, Russian volunteers, even a Finnish-Russian grocery store.

The project started when Mikhail Zhidkov of Compassion Ministries, a Russian, church-based relief agency, asked Mennonite mission workers Walter and Janet Bergen if they could help him get school kits for the children the agency helps, in time for Orthodox Christmas.

The Bergens, who work in Moscow with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church, agreed to look for funding.

"We felt that we wanted to do something special for these children, who live under very trying circumstances. The Christians here try to care, but they are almost bereft of resources," said Janet.

The Bergens decided the project might be more efficient if they could purchase the items for the school kits in Moscow instead of having the kits mailed from North America. They asked the Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Clearbrook, B.C., and the Lowe Farm (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church to contribute money.

The two churches, which support the Bergens through the COM Mission Partner Program, responded with donations totaling $700.

Bagless: "Then we encountered a problem," said Janet. "We had money for supplies, but no bags to put them in.

"It's a completely new idea here to approach businesses for donations, but that's what we did. I called Stockmann's, a Finnish-Russian joint-venture grocery store, and asked their manager for 1,200 bags. He said, 'Sure!'"

Russian Christian volunteers, who support Compassion Ministries, assembled the school kits. Each contained a notebook, a picture book about Jesus in Russian, a balloon, pencils and some candy. English-speaking Baptists donated the children's books.

Bring in the choir: Then the Bergens got a call from Marles Preheim, director of the Bethel College Concert Choir from North Newton, Kan. He asked whether the Bergens could arrange for the choir to perform in Moscow. The Bergens and Compassion Ministries decided that the distribution of the school kits could be combined with the choir concerts.

The first concert occurred Jan. 6 at a boarding school for 500 disabled children, 50 percent of whom are orphans. At its conclusion, a young boy who couldn't use his hands presented Preheim with a red paper tulip. The boy had created it with his feet as a token of his appreciation for the choir's program.

In a gesture of gratitude, the choir members picked up the school kits and helped distribute them.

Pitching in: *Children at the Internat boarding school for disabled children in Moscow receive school kits thanks to Mennonites, Baptists, Russian volunteers, a choir and a grocery store.*

Inside the news

Lao church in Minnesota holds first baptisms / p. 15

Last refugees leave Thailand / p. 15

Human rights abuses in Chiapas / p. 18

The General Conference Mennonite Church received $295,000 in annuities in 1993 compared with $86,500 in 1992. Gift annuities allow individuals to contribute a sum to an organization and earn income (based on their age) on the money until they die. At that time, the remainder of the sum is the property of the organization. For more information about General Conference gift annuities, contact Gary Franz, Planned Giving Director, General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

• • •

Miami will be the next stop for the Abraham and Sarah Caravan project. Volunteers will help a Hispanic congregation, Iglesia Menonita Encuentro de Renovacion, with house repair, outreach and children's activities March 2-10. The Abraham and Sarah Caravan project, initiated by the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church, helps put into action the conference's 1992 resolution to plant and support new churches. The Miami congregation began in October 1992 as the result of door-to-door visitation. In addition to painting and repairing the church building, volunteers will help repair several houses damaged by Hurricane Andrew in 1992. The caravan is designed for older adults who wish to combine retirement travel with a service experience. Caravan participants cover their own expenses. To volunteer contact Lester and Winifred Ewy, 3202 Royer West Drive, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-2965.

"In Mexico's Nafta-life, they'll sing 'Swing sweet, Loewen's chariot," read a headline in the Dec. 9, 1993, *Wall Street Journal*. The article described how funeral service empire Loewen Group Inc. plans to expand into Mexico in the wake of the North American Free Trade Agreement. "The area is steeped in traditional funeral services," said a Loewen executive. "Funerals in Mexico are regarded as a real celebration of life." The business began in the Mennonite community of Steinbach, Man., and is now based in British Columbia. Ray Loewen is chief executive. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

The Ohio Mennonite Conference of the Mennonite Church has suspended the ministerial credentials of Alvin Beachy of Cincinnati. The suspension is for alleged financial irresponsibility. The conference responded to requests from Beachy's family for help stopping Beachy from soliciting money. "It is with deep regret that we must ask you not to give any more financial assistance to Alvin Beachy," the family says in a letter to the church sent to *Gospel Herald*. "We find no credible evidence that the money goes for honest use." Beachy told *Gospel Herald*, "I have not gained one dollar for myself. And all the money will be repaid." (*Gospel Herald*)

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee's Latin America department has scheduled an economics study tour to Mexico and Honduras for July 8-23. The group will study economic policy. It will visit a variety of people from Mexico and Honduras: peasant farmers, grain producers, union members and leaders, business-people, church members, and both U.S. and local government officials. The tour is open to 10 participants. Some scholarship money is available. Applications are due Feb. 28; contact Ed Stamm Miller, Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th St., Akron PA 17501, (717) 859-1151.

A second concert took place at the Central Baptist Church on Jan. 7, which is Orthodox Christmas. Walter introduced the choir: "Many years ago Mennonites were persecuted. Everything was taken from us, save our voices. So we learned to sing for joy, to the glory of God. This choir is the fruit of a 400-year tradition of making music for the love of God."

The Christmas story was read in English and in Russian and Walter gave a brief meditation. "The Christmas story tells us that God came into this world, our world, for every human life. No matter the color of your skin, the strength of your body, God loves you, each one of you, as an only child. This is the God that I urge you to embrace," he said.

• • • • • • • • • • • • • •

'The Christians here try to care, but they are almost bereft of resources.'
Janet Bergen

• • • • • • • • • • • • • •

At the end of the evening, members of the audience and the choir joined to sing "Silent Night" in Russian and in English.

Close to 400 kits were distributed to children; the majority had mental or physical disabilities. Some of the children had debilitating medical conditions. "I gave up my seat at the concert to a frail child with blue fingertips and lips. With my medical training, I surmised that the child had a heart defect," said Janet. About 200 families each received a can of MCC beef and a Russian New Testament. The Russian Bible Society donated the New Testaments.

Following the program, a mother of one of the disabled children said, "For so many years I have lived in darkness. Life seemed hard, hopeless. I thought that was how life is. Today you brought a little light into my life. Today I felt some hope, not just darkness. Thank you."

In total, Compassion Ministries distributed about 3,000 school kits and 1,300 adult packages over Orthodox Christmas. "Once the project started, the needs far outstripped the resources. Compassion Ministries scrambled to find more resources and divided the kits they had in order to meet the demand," said Walter.

"In the midst of a difficult winter,

Drought sets back work in northeast Brazil

Tacaimbo, Brazil (MCC)—Unemployment here has soared above 70 percent, says local Mennonite Central Committee worker Amy Tripp. That figure is double what it was last year.

Drought has impoverished the region. Families can no longer support children; thus "street kids" have become commonplace here for the first time.

The drought continues to have wide-ranging effects. The coastal sugar cane region has largely shut down production following a record low harvest. MCC Brazil plans to buy seeds to rebuild the faltering economy when the rains return.

Bruce Hildebrand (MCC)

Wetter days: *Farmer with kid goat in Tacaimbo area of northeast Brazil in happier, wetter times. MCC Brazil will help purchase seeds when rains arrive.*

the efforts of North American Mennonites and Christians in Russia brought joy to those who have known so little," he said. *From a report by Walter Bergen*

Lao church in Minnesota holds first baptisms

Mountain Lake, Minn. (GCMC)—Nine young people were baptized at the first baptism service of the Lao Christian Fellowship here Nov. 7, 1993.

Up to 100 people participate in the fellowship, which started meeting in August 1992. Laotian families first arrived in Mountain Lake in 1988. Today 170 Laotians are residents in this town of 2,000 people.

During the baptism the young people each lit a candle from a large central candle that symbolized Jesus.

"I came from a Buddhist home," said one candidate. "I was getting involved with a gang," said another. A third said she felt called to be a missionary in Laos.

The Lao Christian Fellowship is supported by the following congregations: Bethel Mennonite, Gospel Mennonite, First Mennonite, Evangelical Mennonite Brethren, Mennonite Brethren, Missionary Alliance, Evangelical Lutheran, all located in Mountain Lake; and Carson Mennonite Brethren and Emmanuel Mennonite, both of Delft, Minn.

New lights: *Among those baptized Nov. 7, 1993, are (from back left clockwise to front) Siriphone Pouvangmala, Khammany Pouvangmala, Bouason Sisomphou and Singkham Saelee.*

On Dec. 13, 1993, Kong and Sang Chanthaluck publicly commited their lives to Jesus Christ. "Today is a great day for my family and me," said Mr. Chanthaluck. "We want to be a Christian family and want to be one with all Christians.

"About two weeks ago I had a dream," he continued. "I was struggling to climb a mountain. I was climbing over rocks and passing through thick brush. Then someone showed me to a path that was already prepared for me. I took the path [that God had provided for me] and was joyfully able to continue my journey up the mountain."

The Chanthalucks have removed the ancestral shrine from the restaurant they operate in Mountain Lake and replaced it with a cross to symbolize their new faith. Tong Chitchalerntham, the fellowship pastor, is using a Bible correspondence course to tutor the Chanthalucks.

Refugee camps disband in Thailand

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Over the past 20 years, hundreds of thousands of Asians sought refuge in Thailand. Some came in rickety boats from Vietnam, others on foot through the jungles of Laos and Cambodia. They fled violence, political upheaval and grinding poverty.

At the height of the crisis, scores of refugee camps dotted Thailand's borders. But now Thailand's role as regional host to Indo-Chinese refugees is drawing to a close. Since 1992 some 370,000 Cambodians returned home, and by 1995 Thailand hopes to phase out Lao and Vietnamese refugee camps as well.

Mennonite Central Committee too has ended its formal involvement in Thailand's refugee camps. During the 1970s and 1980s MCC workers held orientation programs for Canada-bound refugees, helped distribute food and mail in the camps and befriended the often traumatized refugees. MCC worker Victor Neumann accompanied

The Mennonite Health Assembly will meet April 7-10 in Columbus, Ohio. The group will focus on the role congregations play in healing. Contact Dean Preheim-Bartel, Mennonite Health Association, Box 818, Goshen, IN 46527-0818, (219) 533-9069.

* * *

The hockey team of Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, B.C., spent part of December and January in the Czech Republic, where they learned a thing or two about hockey. "Europeans are so fast," says Devrin Froese, captain of the Columbia team, "I thought we were going to get killed." During intermissions at each game, Columbia players spoke about their faith to the fans. To each team they played they gave a film about Jesus and a video called "Hockey Beyond Belief" from Hockey Ministries International. "This year's team was a perfect fit for an overseas ministry," says coach Bruce Enns. "There were a lot of returning players, outstanding goalies, and there was spiritual maturity as well."

* * *

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary will offer seven intensive courses in June. An eighth will be offered in August. Session one (June 6-17) courses include "Anabaptist History and Theology" with C. Arnold Snyder, "Biblical Theology of Violence and Peace" with Willard Swartley and "Christian Worship in Historical and Contemporary Perspectives" with Eleanor Kreider. Session two (June 20-July 1) includes "Conflict and Conciliation" with John Paul Lederach, "Family Therapy and Pastoral Care" with Delores Friesen, "Christian Spirituality and Peacemaking" with Arthur Paul Boers and "Creation and Spiritual Renewal" with Perry Yoder. The third session (Aug. 1-26) course is "Reading Hebrew Narrative: Ruth" with Perry Yoder. Contact Ruth Ann Gardner or Dorothy Nickel Friesen at (800) 964-2627 or (219) 295-3726.

A celebration will be held Feb. 27 at the Lin Shen Road Mennonite Church in Taichung, Taiwan. The celebration marks the 40th anniversary of the General Conference Mennonite Mission in Taiwan and the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan. The cessation of the GCMM in Taiwan and the establishment of a sister relationship with North American Mennonite churches and the Argentina Taiwan Mennonite Church will be formalized.

• • •

Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, Kan., on Jan. 9 passed a Statement on Guns and Violence. It reads in part, "As the inheritors of the Anabaptist peace witness, we support disarmament efforts at all levels of our society ... we support legislative efforts to regulate public access to handguns ... We invite all who share these values and this commitment to community, regardless of faith or philosophy, to join us in working toward a more peaceful and harmonious future."

• • •

A total of 123 churches are praying regularly for the Abraham and Sarah church-planting project, which was initiated by the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church. This project is helping implement the GCMC resolution that calls for 50 new churches to be planted by 2001. "Church growth is a spiritual phenomenon; it is a grace extended to us from God's hand. Both the Scriptures and history attest that the exclusive catalyst for making church growth and revival happen is prayer," write Eudene and Levi Keidel in an Abraham and Sarah prayer newsletter. The Keidels are the volunteer prayer coordinators. For more information write to them at 6411 Harrison, Fort Wayne, IN 46807.

ships in the Gulf of Thailand that helped guide Vietnamese boat people to shore.

MCC material assistance to refugees in Thailand included more than 10,000 layette bundles containing baby clothing, diapers, soap and other supplies.

Only about 7,000 Vietnamese and some 25,000 Hmong, a minority group from Laos, remained in Thailand at the end of 1993, according to Don Sensenig, longtime MCC refugee worker. Sensenig, of Akron, Pa., recently completed a two-year assignment in Southeast Asia.

Sensenig credits the sharp reduction of refugees in Thailand to the collapse of Marxist socialism, the lifting of the U.S.-led economic embargo against Cambodia and to international assistance and investment in the region. The United Nations poured $2 billion U.S. into repatriating Cambodian refugees and preparing Cambodia for May 1993 elections. International agencies have also assisted Vietnamese and Lao repatriation.

Ann Martin (MCC)

Going home: *370,000 Cambodian refugees left Thailand to return home in 1992.*

But Sensenig says the several thousand asylum seekers remaining in Thailand deserve "help and compassion." He describes them as "caught in limbo." Many left their home countries under previous conditions and are now denied resettlement elsewhere. Many also refuse repatriation because they cannot accept that real changes have occurred, both in their homelands and internationally.

Many Hmong, for example, refuse to return to Laos until the Communist government falls. This desperate hope is fueled by U.S.-based Hmong leaders' claims that resistance forces, backed by the United States and Thailand, will invade Laos from Thailand. Sensenig says he sees no evidence to support this. On the contrary, Thai businesses are investing in Laos.

Cooperation: Since returning to the United States in December, Sensenig has visited North American Hmong and Lao communities to provide information about changes in Southeast Asia, such as Thailand's transition from hostility to cooperation with the Lao government, and about Thailand's determination to force the remaining asylum seekers to leave.

Despite the positive turn of events on Thailand's eastern and northern borders, Sensenig points out that people from Burma, particularly minority groups oppressed by Burma's ruling military junta, continue to flee to Thailand. Although the Thai government does not officially recognize them as refugees, some 70,000 live along the border.

In addition to refugee assistance in Thailand, MCC U.S. in 1975 began helping resettle Vietnamese refugees. By the time the program closed in 1990, it had helped U.S. Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches sponsor more than 5,000 refugees. *Pearl Sensenig*

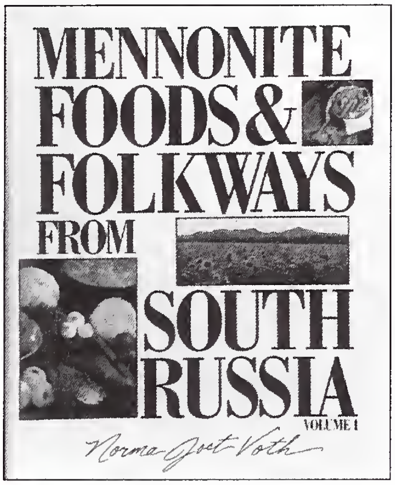
Worldwide refugee count grows

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Hundreds of thousands of refugees have returned home from camps in Thailand, but worldwide 10,000 more people become refugees each day.

In 1993 the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported nearly 20 million refugees, an eightfold increase from the 2.5 million in 1970. An additional 24 million people are "displaced"; they have been forced from their homes but continue to live in their countries of origin.

Asia has the largest number of refugees, followed by Africa and Europe. Iran tops the list as host to more than 4 million refugees, mostly from Afghanistan and Iraq. Due to civil war some 5 million Sudanese are displaced within their own country. *Pearl Sensenig*

Russian Mennonite Traditions



MENNONITE FOODS & FOLKWAYS FROM SOUTH RUSSIA

VOLUME I

Norma Jost Voth

Mennonite Foods & Folkways from South Russia, Volume I

by Norma Jost Voth

This book explores the abundant food tradition which developed when Mennonites from eastern Europe settled in the Soviet Union. Their flavorful cooking blended with their Ukrainian neighbors' foods to create delectable and distinguishing dishes. This thoroughly researched collection of recipes is laced with memories from these people and their North American descendants. A wonderful cookbook and foodbook, rich with stories and more than 500 recipes.

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A Russian Mennonite herself, Norma Jost Voth interviewed persons whose lives have spanned most of Russian Mennonite history. Their memories of orchards and gardens, Faspa and weddings, food preservation and wheat harvest fill this volume. In addition, there are more than 100 recipes (different from those in Volume I).

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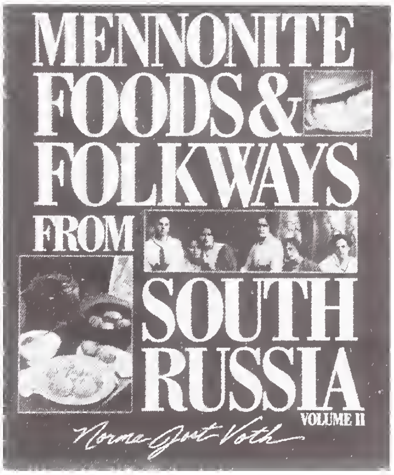

MENNONITE FOODS & FOLKWAYS FROM SOUTH RUSSIA

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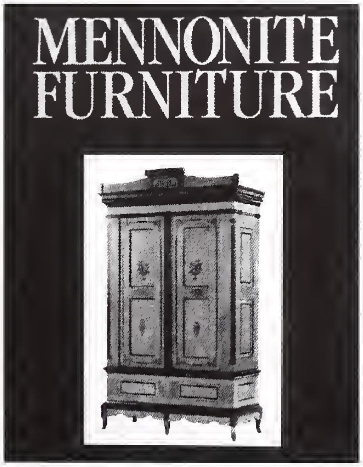

MENNONITE FURNITURE

Mennonite Furniture: A Migrant Tradition (1766-1910)

by Reinhild Kauenhoven Janzen and John M. Janzen

The group of Mennonites who eventually settled the plains states and provinces of North America developed a furniture tradition that reflected their values and the mid-1700s styles of the Vistula Delta. A century of life in South Russia brought few changes to the way they made their furniture and passed it on.

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Camp Amigo, Sturgis, Mich., will host a conference on restorative justice March 11-13. Speakers include Howard Zehr of Mennonite Central Committee and Marlin Jeschke of Goshen (Ind.) College. Contact the camp at (616) 651-2811 by April 30.

• • •

The Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale will be held Friday evening and Saturday, April 8-9, at the state fairgrounds in Hutchinson, Kan. The sale benefits Mennonite Central Committee. For more information, contact LaVern Stucky, Route 1, Box 54, Peabody, KS 66866, (316) 983-2348.

• • •

Five French-speaking Canadians organized as a Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation left Montreal Jan. 31 for two weeks in Haiti. They joined five Christian Peacemaker Corps members already in Haiti. John Docherty, a Mennonite pastor and director of Friendship House in Montreal, coordinates the group. It is the first French-speaking delegation sent by CPT to the French Creole-speaking country.

• • •

Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., will host two Elderhostel programs: June 12-18 and Aug. 7-13. Elderhostel is a short-term educational experience for older adults. Most participants live at the college and eat in the dining room during their stay. The first session will offer "Mendelssohn's Life, Loves and Letters" taught by Helen Martens, "Revolutions in Russia" with Leonard Friesen and "The Bible as a Whole" with John Miller. The August session includes "Reflections on Ontario Mennonite History" with Lorna Bergey, "Universal Health Care: Promises and Pitfalls" with Henry Regehr and "Music: How to Listen" with Terry Kroetsch. Contact Ruth Anne Nigh at (519) 885-0220.

COMMENTARY

Human rights flounder in uprising's wake

Editor's note: *In January Martin Shupack, a lawyer and pastor working with Mennonite Central Committee in Mexico City, joined a Fellowship of Reconciliation delegation investigating human rights in Chiapas, Mexico. The Zapatista National Liberation Army rose up against Mexican government forces Jan. 1. Shupack is a member of New Covenant Fellowship, Champaign-Urbana, Ill.*

Emily Will (MCC)

Whose decade? *Maria Salome Espinosa (left), a Nahuatl woman from Guerrero, Mexico, discusses herbal medicine with Mennonite Central Committee worker Pauline Aguilar. In the United Nations' Decade of the Indigenous Peoples, Mexico's government continues to neglect indigenous groups like the Nahuatl in Guerrero and the indigenous peoples of Chiapas.*

Mexico City (MCC)—At 11 a.m. on Jan. 12, as our vehicles—draped with banners announcing our human rights mission—wound their way through mountain roads toward Ocosingo, the Mexican government declared a cease-fire and opened the roadblocks leading into the conflictive zone.

We were thus the first group of international human rights observers to reach Ocosingo. Ocosingo was one of the towns in the state of Chiapas temporarily occupied by the insurgent Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), an army comprised mostly of well-organized indigenous peasants. Mexican armed forces routed the Zapatistas and sealed off the town for more than a week, but could not prevent emerging reports of human rights abuses.

Our team stayed in Ocosingo Jan. 13-14. If accurate, what we heard indicates both the federal armed forces and the EZLN committed abuses of international human rights norms and of the laws of war.

Deliberate death: As of Jan. 13 the Roman Catholic parish in Ocosingo had collected the names of 14 civilians killed by gunfire; some, if not most, were likely caught in cross fire. We spoke, however, to the wife and son of a 72-year-old who witnesses said was deliberately shot by army personnel as he walked home.

We also heard of civilian women killed in their homes by cross fire, and of a child killed by a grenade that crashed through the window of his home. Descriptions suggest the army may have needlessly endangered area civilians.

The Ocosingo parish priest gave us a firsthand account of an air attack. While the attack focused on the market where the Zapatistas were based, army aircraft also strafed homes and other buildings, including the church three blocks away, where the priest and several nuns were working.

We also heard of disappearances. After government forces drove insurgents from the municipal hospital, they reportedly took away an undetermined number of indigenous men visiting hospitalized relatives. The men have not been heard from since.

The army then removed the patients from the hospital, regardless of medical condition, without helping them find care.

Some EZLN prisoners captured by the army appear to have been murdered, as evidenced in a *Time* magazine photograph. The army commander in Ocosingo denied any killings of prisoners and insisted the scene was fabricated.

However, we spoke to a journalist who said he and dozens of local residents saw the pictured five bodies lying in a row. The journalist said he saw that four had been shot in the back of the head and saw rope marks where their wrists were tied. The army has not accounted for the now-missing bodies.

We also heard reports of EZLN violations. Upon entering Ocosingo, the Zapatistas took hostage five people dining in a private home. One, a physician, was later killed in cross fire trying to escape.

Four local security police were killed in the initial EZLN attack. According to most accounts, they were killed during the fighting. But we heard one report that the four, gravely wounded, were shot and "finished off" by EZLN forces. Reports also suggest that the EZLN occupied the hospital, endangering the civilian patients.

Report: Our team left Ocosingo Jan. 14. Our report calls for thorough independent investigations of reported violations of internationally recognized human rights.

Meanwhile the people of Ocosingo, especially the indigenous population, now lack necessary resources for survival.

With the uprising, the state of Chiapas had 15 minutes of world fame. One can only ask whether the rebellion will stimulate new movement toward democratic change and economic reform or lead to increased repression.

The answer may depend in part on whether the wider international community will stay attentive to the realities of life and death in Chiapas. *Martin Shupack*

Program director and faculty in social work: Doctorate desired, master's degree in social work and at least two years of post-master's practice experience required. Responsibilities include overseeing and managing an accredited social work program and classroom teaching. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

Send resumé to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.**

Director of libraries: Open summer or fall 1995. Oversees the Sadie Hartzler Library, which includes the Menno Simons Historical Library. Qualifications: MLS required. Second degree in theology or another content area desirable. Library and administrative experience essential, some knowledge of and experience with information technology essential. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

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Eastern Mennonite College & Seminary invites applications for a full-time faculty position in the **M.A. in Counseling program**, beginning fall 1994. Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. Responsibilities include instruction and supervision of master's level counseling students. Some work within church settings will be expected. Expertise in marriage/family, child or geriatric counseling will be viewed positively. Applicants must have a doctorate in clinical psychology, counseling psychology, counseling or clinical social work, and have the potential for psychology licensure or counselor certification in the state of Virginia. Applicants must be in full sympathy with Mennonite beliefs and practices.

Applicants should send vita, scholarly papers and three letters of recommendation to: **Dr. P. David Glanzer, Director, M.A. in Counseling program, Eastern Mennonite College & Seminary, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.** EMC&S is a private, church-related liberal arts college and theological seminary located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

Goshen College seeks applicants for a three-quarter time, tenure-track position in **applied voice** (soprano or alto) with additional responsibilities in opera/musical theater. A terminal degree is preferred; a master's degree and college-level teaching experience are required. Should the candidate possess training and experience in choral conducting or music education the contract may be more than three-quarters time on a year-to-year basis. However, these additional duties will not be a part of the tenured position. The screening of applications began Jan. 30 and the position will remain open until filled.

Send a curriculum vitae and three references to **Dr. John Eby, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.** Women and minorities encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Goshen College, a four-year liberal arts institution, is accepting applications for a full-time two-year sabbatical/leave replacement in the **computer and information science** department. The position is open for the 1994-95 and 1995-96 academic years. Teaching responsibilities will include lower- and upper-division undergraduate courses such as CS1, CS2, discrete math, data structures, data communications, programming languages and operating systems. A Ph.D. in computer science or a related area is preferred. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

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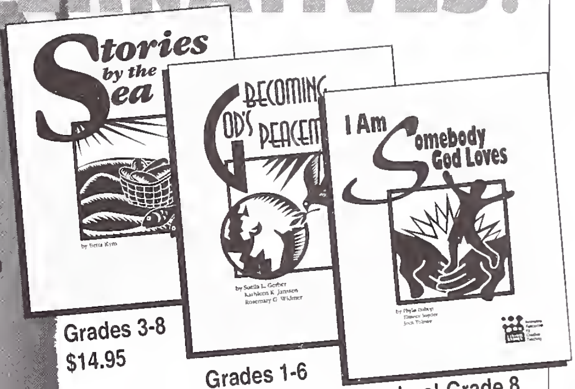

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Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for two positions within **Self-Help Crafts**. All MCC workers must demonstrate a personal Christian faith, active church membership and commitment to nonviolent peacemaking.

1. **General manager** of the Ephrata (Pa.) Self-Help Crafts of the World store. Qualifications include retail and retail management experience and knowledge and strong support of Self-Help Crafts. Overseas experience is preferred. Position includes managing operation of gift shop and tea room.

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Send resumé to **Academic Dean, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062, (316) 327-8206**.

Dean of faculty for **Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary** to be filled by July 1, 1995.

Those interested should send a letter of application, resumé and references by **April 30** to **Erick Sawatzky, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, (219) 295-3726, fax (219) 295-0092**. AMBS is an equal opportunity employer.

Hesston College has a fall 1994 opening for a full-time, nine-month position with primary responsibility for heading the **soccer program**. Seeking individual with commitment to Christian higher education with soccer coaching experience.

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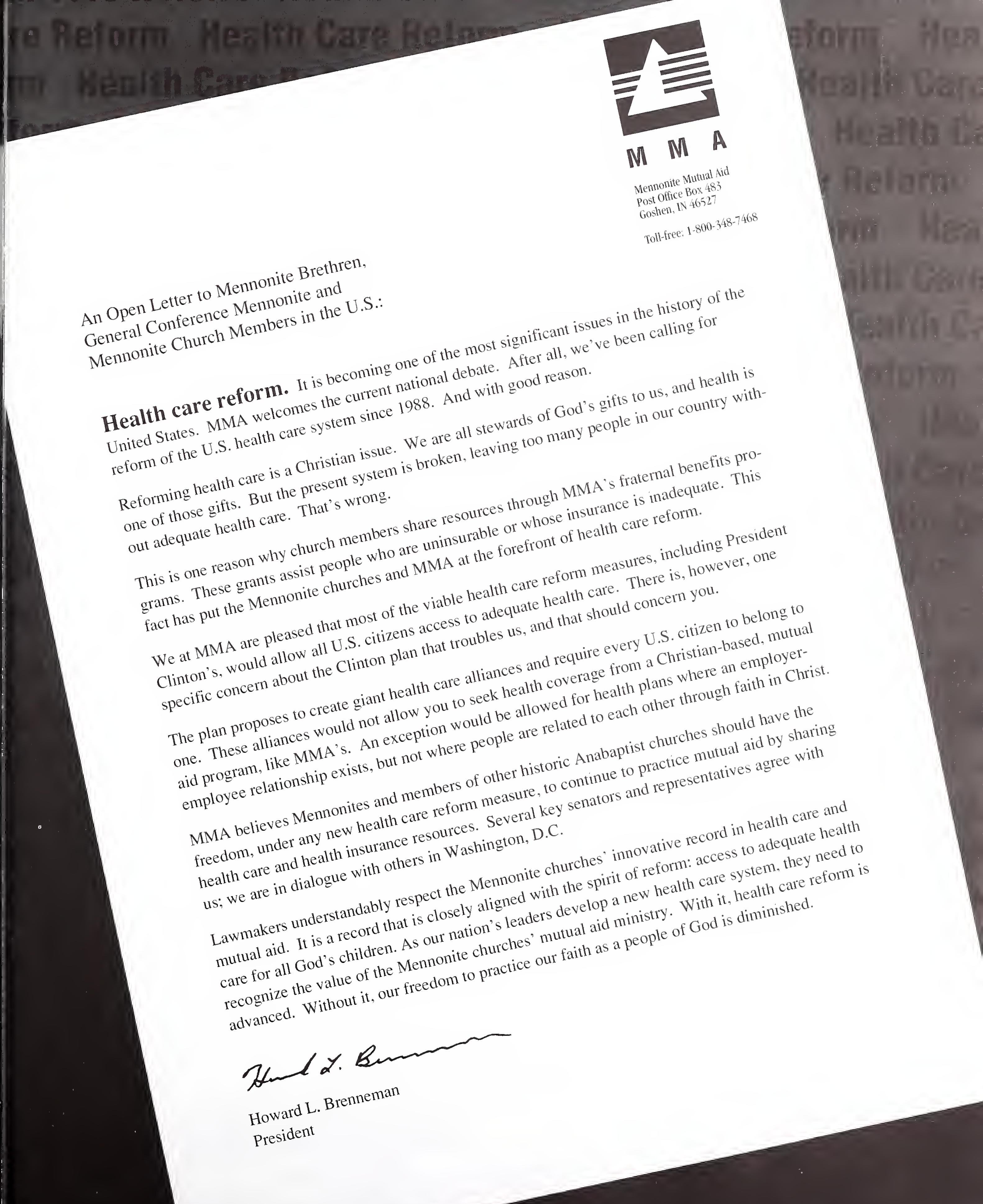
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An Open Letter to Mennonite Brethren,
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Health care reform. It is becoming one of the most significant issues in the history of the United States. MMA welcomes the current national debate. After all, we've been calling for reform of the U.S. health care system since 1988. And with good reason.

Reforming health care is a Christian issue. We are all stewards of God's gifts to us, and health is one of those gifts. But the present system is broken, leaving too many people in our country without adequate health care. That's wrong.

This is one reason why church members share resources through MMA's fraternal benefits programs. These grants assist people who are uninsurable or whose insurance is inadequate. This fact has put the Mennonite churches and MMA at the forefront of health care reform.

We at MMA are pleased that most of the viable health care reform measures, including President Clinton's, would allow all U.S. citizens access to adequate health care. There is, however, one specific concern about the Clinton plan that troubles us, and that should concern you.

The plan proposes to create giant health care alliances and require every U.S. citizen to belong to one. These alliances would not allow you to seek health coverage from a Christian-based, mutual aid program, like MMA's. An exception would be allowed for health plans where an employer-employee relationship exists, but not where people are related to each other through faith in Christ.

MMA believes Mennonites and members of other historic Anabaptist churches should have the freedom, under any new health care reform measure, to continue to practice mutual aid by sharing health care and health insurance resources. Several key senators and representatives agree with us; we are in dialogue with others in Washington, D.C.

Lawmakers understandably respect the Mennonite churches' innovative record in health care and mutual aid. It is a record that is closely aligned with the spirit of reform: access to adequate health care for all God's children. As our nation's leaders develop a new health care system, they need to recognize the value of the Mennonite churches' mutual aid ministry. With it, health care reform is advanced. Without it, our freedom to practice our faith as a people of God is diminished.

Howard L. Brenneman

Howard L. Brenneman
President

Call or write us for a free copy of MMA's study guide, *Health Care Reform: Exploring the Options*

Reviews

FILMS

Homophobia head on

Philadelphia, *written by Ron Nyswaner, produced by Edward Saxon and Jonathan Demme, directed by Jonathan Demme*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

AIDS, discrimination, death. Through the mouth of prosecutor Joe Miller (Denzel Washington), director Jonathan Demme confronts the issues, but the development comes in the unspoken exchanges, the glances, touches and posturing that convey both compassion and hate.

Newsweek

Exchanges: *Washington (left) and Hanks*

Tom Hanks plays Andrew Beckett, a Philadelphia law firm associate and a gay man dying of AIDS. When he is fired because of his illness, he sues for discrimination. Homophobic attorney Joe Miller (Denzel Washington) grudgingly accepts the case.

As the relationship between the two develops, Miller must re-evaluate his understanding of sexuality. His courtroom rhetoric is moving, if unrealistic, but the courtroom scenes are a backdrop to the real drama of the film: the intimate exchanges outside the courtroom, where life is lived.

Didactic, the film retains enough ambiguity to feel real. Beckett is no saint, although considerably more saint than sinner. His relationship with his lover, Miguel, is both tender and rocky. Washington's homophobia is counterbalanced by the love he shows his wife and newborn daughter.

Other aspects are not so convincing. The drama of the courtroom, like most legal sagas, is too fast-paced to be true. The unwavering love Beckett's family exhibits, and the blatant gay bashing of his boss conveniently tip the audience's loyalty to Hanks, an unnecessary favor.

But these are quibbles. Demme deserves laurels for confronting homophobia head on. More, he deserves an audience.

BOOKS

Apocalypse how?

Reckoning With Apocalypse: Terminal Politics and Christian Hope *by Dale Aukerman (Crossroad, 1993, 250 pages)*

Reviewed by Daniel Liechty, Philadelphia

There was a time when interest in apocalypticism was confined to restricted circles of conservative Protestantism. This is no longer the case.

The recent commercial film *The Rapture* as well as the success of such books as *The Late, Great Planet Earth* have made it clear that interest in apocalypticism is widespread. Secularized versions of the "end of history" have appeared in various fields, from ecology to political philosophy. Fascination with the struggle between good and evil in history is truly a sign of the times.

This book raises questions about standard approaches to Christian eschatology. Popularized versions of the apocalypse revolve around a defeat of evil in a final battle of Armageddon. Time and energy is spent trying to learn what roles various figures and nations will play in this final struggle.

Although this kind of interest is also found among Mennonites, there is a problem for those committed to Jesus' way of suffering nonviolence. If God's method of dealing with evil is revealed in Jesus Christ as suffering nonviolence, how in the final struggle could violence become God's weapon against evil?

Dale Aukerman is well-known to Mennonite audiences from his Herald Press book *Darkening Valley*. He is a committed Anabaptist who has become an international spokesperson for Christian peace advocacy. As in his earlier work, Aukerman demonstrates here a thorough familiarity with the theology of the church and the currents of culture. He shows that only by choosing discipleship and obedience to the suffering nonviolence of Christ can we maintain radical Christian hope in the face of "terminal politics."

Aukerman succeeds in interpreting

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Christian apocalyptic texts through an Anabaptist perspective. His work deserves attention among Mennonites.

The CO battle

The Strength Not to Fight: An Oral History of Conscientious Objectors of the Vietnam War *by James W. Tollefson (Little, Brown, 1993, 248 pages)*

Reviewed by Rachel Waltner Goossen, Goessel, Kan.

During the Vietnam War about 170,000 American men received deferments from military service as conscientious objectors. Tens of thousands of COs, including many Mennonites, arranged for alternative service in mental health institutions and similar settings.

Other COs, however, spent years battling Selective Service and the judicial system. Some wound up in prison for draft resistance, others fled to Canada, and still others found themselves conscripted into military service despite their antiwar views. In this volume, author James Tollefson, himself a Vietnam-era CO, presents the stories of 40 men who were drafted but tried to avoid participating in the war.

Tollefson's aim is to "convey the struggle of ordinary people with their families, with their country and with their own conscience." He takes a sobering look at some of the personal costs of conscientious objection. (Absent, however, are the perspectives of women who opposed the war and children whose parents were conscientious objectors.) Although some COs derived satisfaction from their wartime work, others were left with lingering questions and bitter memories.

Chapters are organized around defining moments in the COs' experiences: deciding not to fight, trial and imprisonment, exile, long-term consequences. All the stories are told anonymously. This format protects the identity of the interviewees, but it also results in an account that, while poignant, lacks context. Readers are likely to wish for more background information and a more cohesive narrative.

A strong theme of alienation runs through this work, countered by a theme of reconciliation. Mennonite readers steeped in congregational accountability will find food for thought in *The Strength Not to Fight*, which frames the war resistance movement essentially as the struggle of individualists against home and nation.

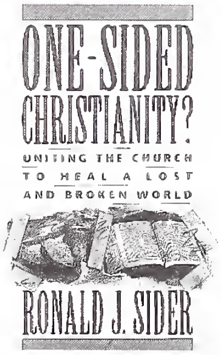
Beyond complacency

One-Sided Christianity? Uniting the Church to Heal a Lost and Broken World *by Ronald J. Sider (Harper Collins, 1993, 250 pages)*

Reviewed by Karla C. Morton, Elbing, Kan.

Once again Ronald J. Sider provides the body of Christ with a challenge to faithful discipleship.

Sider, professor of theology and culture at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, has challenged Christians to move beyond complacency and sameness—first in *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (the book that led me to the Mennonites) and now in *One-Sided Christianity?*



Here Sider, through biblical exegesis, stories and facts, makes the case for a biblical, Christ-centered Christianity that brings together evangelism and social justice. He argues that, while these two aspects of faith are not identical, they are so deeply interrelated that one without the other cannot reveal the gospel of Jesus Christ. Sider writes, " … I work and pray for holistic congregations—thousands and thousands of congregations across the globe so in love with Jesus that they cannot stop inviting non-Christians to come to Christ, and so compassionately concerned for needy neighbors that they cannot stop feeding the hungry and empowering the oppressed."

Sider examines differing understandings of salvation that determine the way denominations do mission. "One group saves souls. The other reforms structures. That's what I call one-sided Christianity." His study outlines four theological views of salvation:

- individualistic evangelical,
- radical Anabaptist,
- dominant ecumenical,
- secular Christian.

He then demonstrates the need to join evangelism and social justice in the body of Christ.

Sider's prolific use of Scripture requires the reader to have a Bible at hand. Personal stories and facts make this book interesting and readable, yet it could easily be used as a text for seminaries as well.

Sider documents his work extensively. Some may not find it accessible.

I highly recommend that pastors read this book, as well as anyone who is concerned that the mission of Christ's body is united in order to heal both soul and body, rather than continuing to feed the dualism that has stunted the work of the church far too long.

Resources

- **Islam: An Introductory Packet** is a set of three videocassettes and a study guide offering an introduction to Islam. Available from MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, or MCC Manitoba, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.
- **A Mennonite Woman's Life** by Phyllis Pellman Good (Good Books, 1994, $11.95 U.S.) recounts the story of Ruth Hershey of Lancaster County (1895-1990) as she recorded the life of Mennonite women in the early 1900s with her box camera.
- **The Harmonia Sacra, 25th Edition** (Good Books, 1994, $19.95 U.S.) is the latest version of Joseph Funk's 1832 songbook. This edition includes later four-part harmonizations as well as earlier three-part tunes.
- **But Why Don't We Go to War?** by Susan Mark Landis (Herald Press, 1993, $9.95 U.S./$12.95 Canadian) helps upper elementary children and their parents understand Jesus' path to peace and to take next steps. Includes stories about peacemakers, biblical dramas, helps for parents.

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Editorial

The how question

We've all heard missionary sermons that include the question from Isaiah 6:8, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" This is an important question that the Holy Spirit uses to call people to serve the Lord. But a further question is, How shall we go?

God does not speak to us in a vacuum but urges us to mission in a specific time and place. Even Isaiah's call came "in the year that King Uzziah died" (Isaiah 6:1). God calls all of us to proclaim the gospel, and we may even hear a call to a vocation—whether it be to mission work or the pastoral ministry, or to ministries of accounting, carpentry, journalism, nursing, parenting or teaching. But we also must listen for God's leading in how we pursue our particular vocation, our particular work. Otherwise we are like the person who says, "I love humanity; it's people I can't stand."

God's call may be an emotional, life-changing experience. But living it out requires the nitty-gritty of daily work, of being faithful in the details as we pursue the larger goal.

Some people have adopted a romantic view of mission work. We send people to foreign lands to convert the heathen to Christ. Mission workers themselves know that it is much more complex than that. They know that some missionaries, while intending to preach the pure gospel, have also converted people to certain cultural practices, made them look and feel more American or Canadian than Christian.

Our own Commission on Overseas Mission, with more than 90 years experience, works hard on how to present the Good News of Jesus Christ without muddying the message with cultural practices that are not part of the gospel. They know how difficult this can be, and over the years they have gained much knowledge. They work closely with churches in other countries to discern *how* mission workers should go.

> God's call may be an emotional, life-changing experience. But living it out requires the nitty-gritty of daily work, of being faithful in the details as we pursue the larger goal.

Unfamiliar country: This issue offers the views of five new mission workers as they go to Latin America (see pages 3-6). They share their wrestling with the how question. They realize the pitfalls of going to an unfamiliar country thinking you have all the answers. Instead they go with questions. They go wanting to learn from the people they are serving. They go realizing that they "know only in part" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

These workers represent a new generation of mission workers. And while we should be encouraged that God is calling forth a dynamic group of younger people to overseas mission work, we must also recognize that times are changing. We are not in the year of King Uzziah's death. In each time period, God calls people to be faithful to their call. These workers go forth in this time, just as previous workers have followed God's leading in other, unique times and places.

What then is our calling? We, too, need to hear God's call to us. And as we follow that call—in whatever field it may be—we must discern how best to serve God in that vocation. We, too, must be willing to learn, to listen to those we serve. And let us support these new mission workers, with our prayers and our money, as they represent us in proclaiming the gospel in Latin America and throughout the world. *Gordon Houser*

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For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 05
MARCH 8, 1994

The CHALLENGE of Christian education

- 12 ways to strengthen your church's Christian education program (see page 6)
- CPR for your Christian education program (see page 7)

Prologue

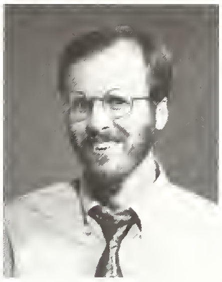
Have we taken Sunday school for granted? Or do we skip it—either sleep in or do something else—because it isn't relevant?

Christian education, which includes Sunday school and other areas of church life, is vital to the health of our churches, our families and our own faith. Read various church members' responses to the needs of Christian education in their congregations (pages 3-5). They offer challenges as well as encouraging examples of Christian nurture.

John Kroeger and Catherine Woolner tell of successes their congregations have had in Sunday school (page 7).

Does your congregation offer a children's story on Sunday morning? Arthur P. Boers gives us some helpful tips about how to tell effective children's stories (pages 8-9).

The next time your church is looking for a Sunday school teacher or for someone to tell the children's story, read over this issue and pray about it. You may also want to pass this issue around in your own Sunday school class.



I just returned from sitting with the Integration Exploration Committee, which will bring recommendations to the general boards of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church about when and how the two denominations should join. Look for my report in our next issue. *gh*

Next issue: Whatever happened to resurrection art?

Cover: Photo by CLEO Photography

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The CHALLENGES *of Christian education*

People from four Mennonite churches talk about their experiences with Christian education.

Since fall 1991, staff members of the Commission on Education (COE) of the General Conference Mennonite Church have been visiting churches in the United States and Canada. The goal of these "Go Now, and Tell ..." tours is for COE staff to hear firsthand about the activities and issues in congregations as well as to provide resources. In the following articles, representatives from four churches that were part of the COE tours talk with General Conference news editor Carla Reimer about some of the experiences and challenges they expressed to COE staff.

OTTAWA MENNONITE CHURCH:

Today's generation relates best to TV

According to Mary Enns Abanto, Sunday school superintendent at the Ottawa (Ont.) Mennonite Church, children and youth today "relate best to television. The church puts out this wonderfully thought-out material, but it is not gripping our young people.

"It is an unfortunate fact, but if the church wants to communicate with them, it needs to keep up with the mass media."

Mary, who is a teacher at a public high school, finds that her students can't appreciate a slow-paced approach to anything, even in the form of a movie. "They need to be visually stimulated every 30 seconds," she said.

Mennonites need to face the reality that "kids have square eyes and their eyes are getting squarer every day with the addition of new technology like video games," she said.

Mary says she is well aware of the Mennonite hesitancy to use "worldly" methods. But she argues that unless "all of us are willing to pull the plug on television and stop paying our cable bills, the situation is unlikely to change."

She believes the solution is for the church to learn how to effectively use the media. "Mennonites have so many wonderful values that are different from what we see in the rest of society. We should learn how to promote them," Mary says.

For example, the church could produce a series of action-packed videos that deal with issues such as poverty, racism and peace. "Our kids don't hear about these issues much in the secular media," she says.

"We also need resources that encourage our students to look critically at media, since that is their world," she adds.

The rapid changes in technology also serve to keep the generations far apart from each other, says Mary, who notes that even in five years, youth will be facing different issues as a result of new media.

"We should do all we can to encourage an intergenerational approach in our churches during Sunday school and worship, as well as socially," she says.

The best response, perhaps, would be for the church to ask members of the media generation for advice on how to communicate with them, she says.

"It is an unfortunate fact, but if the church wants to communicate with them, it needs to keep up with the mass media."

Mary Enns Abanto

The CHALLENGES *of Christian education*

MAPLE AVENUE MENNONITE CHURCH:

Sunday school material needs to be relevant

Much of the Sunday school material available today is biased toward rural settings and doesn't begin to address the issues facing urban churches such as Maple Avenue Mennonite Church, says Sunday school superintendent Jeri Black.

Although this approximately 40-member congregation is located in Waukesha, Wis., which has a population of 50,000, the town is close enough to Milwaukee to feel its influence.

"We need material that is relevant to the challenges our kids are facing," says Jeri. "We have a lot of single parents and many low-income families. Several families come with a history of drug and alcohol abuse."

When Jeri was teaching about Acts to a class of seventh and eighth graders, she had them look through secular and religious periodicals to find stories about Christians who are carrying out the good news in their communities.

"It seems to take a lot more to hold their interest," she says. "Things have to be well organized or you just lose the kids."

Jeri worries about teacher burnout, especially since Maple Avenue has a small number of members. During the summer, instead of Sunday school, the church offers intergenerational activities to give the teachers a chance to recoup their energy.

The church also doesn't always have the funds to buy educational resources. "We have some creative teachers," Jeri says, noting that the Sunday school classes used to meet in an unfinished basement of an old home. Now the classes meet in the pastors' apartment.

Despite the many challenges, Jeri feels that Christian education is a priority for the church. "Sunday school provides an important group learning experience. It is there that relationships are made," she says.

She also notes that since many of the church families come from different religious backgrounds, Sunday school is the place they can learn about Anabaptist theology. "How else will we pass on our values?" she says.

"If our Christian faith does not speak to our everyday life ... what is the point?"

Charles Watson

PAOLI MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP:

Christian education should facilitate thinking

At Paoli (Ind.) Mennonite Fellowship there is a "strong assumption that the Sunday school teacher isn't supposed to be a leader who stands in front of the class and lectures but someone who facilitates thinking and dialogue," says Charles Watson, who co-pastors the church with Linda, his wife.

Between 120 and 150 people, mostly first-generation Mennonites, participate in the fellowship. At an annual covenant ceremony, individuals are asked to state whether they will be involved in the fellowship during the coming year.

"What people appreciate is an approach to Christian faith that is at the level of their everyday lives," says Charles.

"If our Christian faith does not speak to our everyday life—how we relate to our family and friends, how we manage our time, how we spend our money—what is the point?" he adds.

As a result, one adult Sunday school class has dealt with a wide range of

"We need material that is relevant to the challenges our kids are facing."

Jeri Black

topics, including aging parents—a reality many in the congregation face.

He said the fellowship often calls on the resources of people in the congregation as well as the community to teach topical classes. For example, a nurse practitioner from the fellowship helped coordinate some of the classes about aging parents.

"Sunday school provides the opportunity for people to interact with each other and to build a real sense of Christian community," said Charles.

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH IN CALGARY:

Committed teachers make all the difference

"Faith is caught, not taught" is one cliché that happens to be true, says David Bergen, associate pastor of the 290-member First Mennonite Church in Calgary.

If students don't see their teachers as people who are committed to the Christian faith, it doesn't matter how many resources you have, you won't have an impact on their lives, he says.

First Mennonite Church has had fewer problems finding committed Sunday school teachers ever since its members began experiencing a sense of renewal after wandering in what seemed for them a "spiritual wasteland," he says. He believes many of the "breathtaking changes" at First Mennonite Church are due to the power of God revitalizing individual lives.

David thinks many churches languish because people expect so little from their faith. For example, many of the adults at First Mennonite Church went out for coffee instead of attending Sunday school. "There was no vision for how education can be life-transforming," he says.

By contrast, he says, an adult Sunday school class now offered by the church often doesn't have enough space for all the people who want to attend. (See the article on page 7.)

The class, he says, combines Bible study with an emphasis on fellowship and caring. "What people need is a visible demonstration of faith. From there, the church just builds," he says.

"Ultimately God speaks through my life and through the lives of others in the church," David says. "Faith begins with the spiritual, which you can't map or control. To have a life of faith is to have a life of change."

"To have a life of faith is to have a life of change."

David Bergen

12 ways to STRENGTHEN *your church's Christian education program*

1 Know your congregation
How many adults are involved in educational opportunities? What are the interests and needs of the congregation? Where are the majority of people in their faith journeys? What can you learn from the education programs of other congregations?

2 Build relationship skills
Congregations in which people are growing in their faith are often warm, caring places. This depends on people who have developed interpersonal skills and know how to listen.

3 Promote a thinking climate
Expand members' thinking by discussing issues, ethics, values and interpretation of Scripture.

4 Promote global awareness and understanding
We live in a global context—children, youth and adults need to learn how to live in a changing world. We need to help each other be responsive and responsible.

5 Promote intergenerational contact
Connect the wisdom of older people with the insights of the young. Faith maturity is connected to age. Foster cross-generational dialogue.

6 Coordinate themes across age groups
Provide a common context for conversation. This also fosters cross-generational dialogue.

7 Emphasize parent education
The faith maturity of the next generation depends on receiving quality Christian education at home.

8 Nurture, support and train teachers
Teachers need the support and respect of church leaders and the entire congregation. They need training in effective teaching methods and in general teaching skills.

9 Promote the horizontal and vertical dimensions of faith
In order for faith to mature, we must have both a vertical faith (between an individual and God) and a horizontal faith, which is lived out through service to the community and world.

10 Expect educational involvement
Become a community committed to learning. Build a climate of higher expectations — expect members to do more than attend worship on Sunday morning.

11 Encourage pastoral involvement and training
The pastor's role is key in providing an effective Christian education program. Support the pastor in continuing training in Christian education.

12 Affirm and appreciate your congregation's diversity
Every congregation has a rich diversity of people. Respect and learn from these differences.

Adapted from Effective Christian Education: A National Study of Protestant Congregations, *a research project of the Search Institute, Minneapolis.*

RESOURCES *you can use*

The following are some of the resources available from Faith & Life Press, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, 1-800-743-2484, or Faith & Life Press, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781:

Children:
The following resources are from the Living Stones Collection:

Becoming God's Peacemakers by Suella L. Gerber, Kathleen K. Janssen and Rosemary G. Widmer, $29.95 U.S./ $38.95 Can.

Stories by the Sea by Betta Kym, $14.95 U.S./$19.50 Can.

I Am Somebody God Loves by Phyllis Bishop, Eleanor Snyder and Jock Tolmay, $29.95 U.S./ $38.95 Can.

Children's curriculum coming this fall:

Jubilee: God's Good News, sample kits available now for $34.95 U.S./ $45.50 Can.

Youth:

Challenging Racism by Jody Miller Shearer, $9.95 U.S./ $12.95 Can. Part of the Fast Lane Bible Study Series.

Journey With Justice by Paula Diller Lehman, $7.95 U.S./$10.50 Can.

Adult:

Justice That Heals by Arthur P. Boers, $12.95 U.S./ $16.95 Can.

Seeking the Wilderness: A Spiritual Journey by Tim Lehman, $12.95 U.S./ $16.95 Can.

Untold Stories of Advent by Mark Vincent, $10.95 U.S./$14.95 Can.

Life After 50: A Positive Look at Aging in the Faith Community by Katie Funk Wiebe, $10.95 U.S./$14.25 Can.

Getting to Know Jesus, a Faith & Life Bible Study on Mark by David Schroeder, $4.95 U.S./$6.50 Can.

Power and Glory Everlasting, a Faith & Life Bible Study on Daniel by Jacob J. Enz, $4.95/$6.50 Can.

CPR for your Christian education program

John Kroeger and Catherine Woolner have found renewal through their involvement in Sunday school.

No longer boring

Carla Reimer

Boring is one of the first words that pops out of John Kroeger's mouth when he describes the Sunday school class he used to attend at First Mennonite Church in Calgary. "We used the same old curriculum over and over. I was tired of it," he says.

The class met in the balcony of the church, which wasn't adequately heated during the winter. When the temperature got too cold for comfort, Kroeger used it as an excuse to try something new.

But he found he didn't like the next Sunday school class any better because he felt the teachers weren't prepared.

So when the Sunday school superintendent asked if Kroeger would help out with a new college and career-age class, he figured he had nothing to lose. "I said yes ... just to have a change."

At the beginning the class had a poor turnout. "Only four or five people from that age group showed up," John says.

"Then older people came. Now we have 20 to 25 people between 18 and 45 who come fairly regularly," he says.

John credits the teacher, associate pastor David Bergen, for the success of the class: "He is energetic, organized and enthusiastic. He is the number one reason I attend."

He also likes the fact that the class isn't too structured. Each class begins with an overview of a Bible passage followed by discussion. "We talk about what the Scripture verses mean to us today."

While people don't always share as deeply as they could during the class, John believes that the level of trust is improving.

"I used to hold back because I thought I wasn't good enough to say what I thought. There were people who had more education, more money," he says. "Now I believe I'm too old to be thinking that way. I'm working on being more open."

"Hearing other people's faith journeys has also helped me," he says. During one Sunday school class, David Bergen brought a friend whose husband had died of cancer. She shared how they had prayed for healing and had expected God to answer their prayers.

"Her testimony hit home for a lot of people, including me," he says. "I learned you cannot totally depend on your perception of how God will respond."

John says it isn't only the Sunday school class that has changed for the better: "The whole church is experiencing a time of renewal. People are asking, 'What exactly is faith about?' That's what keeps me going."

Create a welcoming atmosphere

Carla Reimer

Catherine Woolner didn't spend much time debating whether or not she should sign up as a Sunday school teacher at First Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont.

"I believe 99 percent of the time God calls us where we are to be in service to the church. That's the basis for my involvement," she says.

Catherine is a member of the worship committee and serves as chair of the education and nurture commission for the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada.

But while she describes herself as someone who operates at full speed, she also is quick to take time for herself. She teaches adults for one quarter, youth for another quarter, then participates in an adult Bible or book study.

She thinks a lot of people are intimidated by teaching adults because they feel they need to know a lot. But she has found certain qualities are more important: flexibility, openness to dialogue and a willingness to admit you don't know everything.

It is also important to create a "welcoming atmosphere. People often won't speak up because they're afraid of being wrong," Catherine says. "If people don't find their place in the church within three to four months, they won't stay."

"Through my involvement with Christian education, I have had the chance to hear and be challenged by other people's journeys of faith," she says. "It has also given me a greater appreciation of the differences and commonalities in our church."

Catherine also sees her service as a witness to her children: "They see that faith is a daily part of my life. They see how much I love the church."

"There is never a time when I think my efforts are not worth it," she says. "You can't get too much Christian education at home or at church. The Bible speaks to all of your life."

Be careful how you ask the important questions. One girl was sure she'd rather go to Chicago than heaven.

How to tell children's stories i

Arthur P. Boers

When I told the parable about the rich man and Lazarus, my 5-year-old asked, "If the rich man is dead, how can he talk?"

"Only the body dies," I said.

"You mean," she asked, "that we just have heads in heaven?"

My 3-year-old interjected, "Yeah. Do we walk on our noses?"

Children's stories are a big challenge in worship services. Many, who are often willing helpers otherwise, prefer not to tell the children's story. Some who are willing are not qualified. I was horrified when a schoolteacher (of all people) brusquely ordered children to sit down and shut up during her story.

Telling children's stories can be hazardous.

Two factors contribute to fearing the children's story.

First, children are honest. If you do not make sense, they tell you. If you are boring, they may walk away. If you do not meet their needs, they say so. You cannot hide behind a pulpit or a Bible.

Second, children are spontaneously unpredictable in their responses. This frightens us. What if no one responds? What if no one answers correctly?

A man asked children about places they wanted to live. Our daughter talked about Chicago, where a friend lives. The teacher spoke of heaven. To wrap up, he asked, "*Now* where do you want to live someday? In heaven?"

"No, in Chicago," my daughter replied matter-of-factly.

A small church was discouraged about its size. The storyteller reflected on what makes a church real. The children decided that their church was not authentic because it had no building, no choir and no paid pastor. A boy said that their church would be real when they had a graveyard like First Church. No wonder the congregation was dejected.

The children's story as lived parable

Excluding children from worship stems from over-inflating the importance of adults. Jesus indignantly rebuked his disciples, "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). Children are important: "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me" (Mark 9:36). Stories reflect Jesus' concern, modeling respectful love. Children are our *teachers* (Mark 10:16; cf. Matthew 18:3).

My church created a banner that said, "Let the children come to me." A silhouetted Jesus blesses several children. The banner hung in the corner where children gather for stories. Later, Sunday school children made banners that also had a turn at being hung in this sacred spot.

Children's stories are for children. Other benefits are mere by-products. Our first priority is not to win adult approval but to communicate with children. Thus, we should never encourage adults to laugh at children by playing a straight man setting up "Kids-Say-the Darndest-Things" scenarios.

What do we communicate? Simply that God loves children and invites their fellowship. Small children cannot absorb abstractions, but they can *feel* a story. While most stories (like most sermons) will be forgotten, children still carry away the respect—or lack thereof—that we show. We communicate more about God's love by *loving* than by talking about love. A good story is a lived-out parable on the child's worth, the very blessing that Jesus extended.

Effective storytelling

- Be open and flexible. Appreciate and affirm all responses and reactions by nodding or with appropriate words.

Willard Claassen

hurch

- Do not loom above children, forcing them to look up. Find ways to meet on their level: perching on a small chair, crouching or sitting on the dais.
- Encourage involvement by asking questions about feelings or opinions. Avoid questions with clear right and wrong answers, which may lose children who answer incorrectly.
- Vary your questions. One boy decided that the answer to every question was "Jesus." Then he was asked who invented the steam engine.
- Be firm and gentle. When children are under the eyes of the congregation, centering out, scolding or raising your voice at a child is devastating. Maintain eye contact. Smaller children often calm down if you have them on your lap.
- Develop strategies for dealing with behavior problems. When we panic during a story, things will more likely flop. A talkative child can be told, "That's nice, Sarah. Now let's hear the rest of the story."
- Unless a story is simply phrased and has colorful pictures, do not read. It is too easy to lose eye contact. Learn the story and tell it in your own words.
- Vocabulary needs to be simple and clear. I once heard a story for preschoolers that included the words embark, resignation, darted, triumphant, indifferent, exuberant, straits, selflessness, remorse and poverty. It could have been a good story, but it failed.
- Give something to take home: a project, a craft or a vivid image. Children under 10 do not comprehend abstract morals or figurative language.

One woman in our church made window hangings that read "Peacemaker." "When I go by your house," she said, "I hope to see it in your window, and I'll know a peacemaker lives there." My children did not understand the word. But they took the hanging home and put it in the window. My daughter became interested in peacemaking because of the hanging.

- Do not moralize. A good story works without explanation.
- Dare to take risks, even to fail. When you tell a story, everyone (both children and adults) is on your side. Everyone wants the story to succeed.

> ***We communicate more about God's love by loving than by talking about love. A good story is a lived-out parable on the child's worth, the very blessing that Jesus extended.***

Resources for telling stories

- The Bible is our primary source. Tell stories in your own words; bring pictures or objects of illustration when possible. Do a series on heroic children in the Bible, reinforcing the worth of children: Samuel, David the brave shepherd, the slave girl who recommended Elisha to Naaman, Daniel and his friends, Jesus as a boy, the little boy sharing his bread and fishes.
- Children enjoy stories from our own childhood ("the best dog I ever had") or about our own fallibilities. Avoid proclaiming your righteousness or valor. ("When I was your age, I walked three miles to church through snowstorms.")
- Children's books are good if the language is simple and the pictures vivid.
- Object lessons should be used sparingly. We often force-fit ideas to extract a moral. Children do not understand abstract analogies. "Taking Jesus into your heart" is a serious problem of figuring out how to get him in there. After a song about the wise and foolish builders, my preschooler anxiously asked, "Did we build our house on the rock?"
- Children's questions are important. One boy wondered why God spoke in "a still, small voice." We considered whether we prefer parents to speak gently or loudly and why perhaps God spoke to a sad Elijah in a quiet voice. (This also illustrates the importance of small, childlike voices.)
- Significant events in our lives (school, family) or in the church (dedications, baptisms, seasons, holidays) are a rich resource for stories.

Examples of children's stories

- We talked about Psalm 121's claim that the Lord never sleeps. "Of course," said a preschooler, "God lives in the sky where there are no beds." I mentioned places I or my children have fallen asleep: on the floor, on a porch, with a face on one's plate. We talked about the mother who was tired of being woken in the night so she closed her door; the next morning her son was asleep on the floor outside her door. Never again did she close her door. We talked about parents giving us water for thirst or comfort after nightmares. God never sleeps but always watches and cares.
- During Ascension we speculated on why Jesus ascended. I assigned a child to walk to the back of the room, instructing him to keep watching me "every second." That was impossible. Then I sent a child back and asked her to think about an absent grandparent. Every few seconds, I called, "Are you thinking about Grandma?" Similarly the disciples could not do their work in Jerusalem if they were always looking at Jesus. But thinking about him, they could do their jobs.
- At Pentecost I used a magnet, paper clips and a sheet of paper. With the magnet under the paper, the "smart" paper clips followed my orders to move around. With Jesus where we cannot see, the Holy Spirit helps us.

The best children's stories nourish and nurture me as well as having the children interact with God and the gospel. I catch glimpses of receiving the kingdom of God as a child. Once such stories were a burden, but now they inspire me with new energy for the whole worship service.

Arthur P. Boers is pastor at Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Letters

Talk to each other

Linell Roccaforte may be overreacting to alienation of singles in church (Letters, Jan. 11 issue). The difficulty with singles arises because a church is a corporate entity. Marriage enables one to double one's circle of church acquaintances. Married couples are more often asked to help out with the children and youth, and being married and "paired-up" removes the discomfort in social situations when a single man or woman is present. The answer is more effort on the part of all people to talk to each other.

I don't think it is generally true that singles are "emotionally and physically overextended [people] who often have no or few friends." Rather it could be that some of us march to a different drummer and tend to be solitary rather than gregarious. *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*

Fuzzy thinking

The articles about racism in the Jan. 11 issue were good, but I think the word racism is being overused. Using racism to describe all racial problems leads to fuzzy thinking.

Racism is conventionally defined as the belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities or that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race. The anti-Jewish, anti-black cult described in the fourth article (page 7) was racist; it believed that one race was superior to the others. Racism is decreasing. Except for a few fringe groups, not many people now believe that the different races are substantially different biologically.

Jody Miller Shearer's resentment with a black boss (page 3), described in the first article, is an example of unconscious *prejudice*. Prejudice is an irrational dislike of some person or group of people. Prejudice may be directed against others based on race, religion, family, tribe, sex, politics, education or whatever else can separate. Prejudice may be increasing due to isolation of races from each other and because of stereotypical images in the popular media.

The second article (page 4) deals with *discrimination*, which is prejudicial action or treatment. Various races have been discriminated against through the ages. It is difficult to erase the damage done by 400 years of discrimination in the United States.

The young boy in the third article (page 6) confronts prejudice and *bigotry*. A bigot is someone who is stubbornly devoted to his or her opinions or prejudices. By being friendly to people, the young boy started breaking down some of these prejudices.

Mennonites should become familiar with these nuances. Society will not pay heed to our witness if we are confused about what we are talking about. *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*

Exemplary patriotism

As one who believes that God has shed his grace in a singular way upon the United States of America, I am heartened to see that Bethel College's new international study program is providing our youth with "the cross-cultural skills required to maintain America's competitive edge in the global economy" (Jan. 25 issue, pages 14-15). This inspired course offering wisely repudiates any soft-headed, humanitarian aims such as international cooperation or the narrowing of the income gap between the Third World and the First. Instead, it unapologetically seeks to guarantee our country's pre-eminent position in global affairs and the world economy. God be praised for the vision and exemplary patriotism of our American Mennonite academic leadership. *Michael Wiebe, Bloomington, Minn.*

Verbal abuse is worse

In response to the article and then the letter about sexual abuse, it seems to me it is far past time for the church to address all the issues connected with sexual abuse. Although this is great, it concerns me that it seems the discussions have been limited to sexual abuse. What about physical and verbal abuse?

My family and I lived with an abusive man for years. I was with him for almost 20 years. The children were [with him until they were grown].

His perpetrations included all the different kinds of abuse. It seems abusive people carefully choose their targets. The longer we stay, the deeper the enmeshment, and the deeper the enmeshment, the harder it is to leave.

I would rather have had a hundred beatings a day than have had to listen to the verbal abuse. The physical scars heal; the scars from verbal abuse are always there. They end up being etched inside. *Name withheld by request*

Symptoms not the real person

I'm writing today concerning an easy misconception in Eddy Hall's "The Gift of Florence's Weakness" (Dec. 28, 1993, issue, pages 6-7).

The article spoke of "Florence" disrupting services and being unable to hold a job. Her problems living alone independently and these symptoms were labeled "weakness."

I am a "disorganized schizophrenic" and suffer from "generalized anxiety" and some situational depression. I also have a genetic degenerative spinal deformity. I sometimes need support from my fellowship. My symptoms have made me seem weak spiritually at times. I am quite weak physically.

The conditions listed above are symptoms of life-threatening diseases. They are not me, and Florence's symptoms were not her.

When I read this article I recognize the courage [it takes] to work rather than live on governmental helps for the severely disabled. If Florence lost insurance through her work or never had Medicare she would surely be considered uninsurable. She strove on for normalcy, independence and that respect that comes from acceptance as a full partner in the great work. Florence was deceptively mentally ill. Her symptoms were thought to be the real her. The real person I see under the symptoms as a schizophrenic in remission at this time is a heroine battling insurmountable odds to be a regular, unremarkable but full member of the faith community and the community at large. Please don't think less of us because of symptoms that we cannot fight. Watch our courage as we battle on daily to win what you may take for granted.

Florence, I and many of the mentally ill in your midst would inspire you with the courage with which we face daily what is in reality a life-threatening disease. We sometimes need help that the mental health system isn't budgeted to give. We too walk the way of the cross with Jesus. We deserve your respect for what we try to achieve even in failure. God's strength is best shown in weakness. God's gift of courage was his blessing on Mr. Hall's fellowship. Never call courage weakness.

For more information on mental illness your readers may contact:

- The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, 2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 302, Arlington, VA 22201, (703) 524-7600;
- National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse, 311 S. Juniper St., Suite 1000, Philadelphia, PA 19107, (800) 553-4539.

These different resources present differing levels of function and commitment within the world of the mentally ill and our families. Contacting one without the other only gives half the true condition of the mentally ill and our prospects. Doctors say that schizophrenia is incurable. A remission can last a lifetime. *Stephen Fluck, Quakertown, Pa., who suffers from disorganized schizophrenia (in remission) and Scheuermann's kyphosis*

Thoughtful issue

We have just finished reading the Jan. 25 issue of *The Mennonite* and want to thank each of you for a thoughtful issue on an emotional subject, AIDS. We would be well advised to keep an open mind on this topic, and you have done just that. *Orville and Mabel Baer, Trenton, Ill.*

Clarification of family article

I regret the tone of Susan Rensberger's letter to the editor published Jan. 25. She seems not only to disagree with what I've written but also to feel a need to put down and discredit. This approach doesn't lead to healthy, open dialogue.

It feels to me that Susan has misread what I was suggesting in my article (see Dec. 14, 1993, issue, page 11). She has certainly distorted it in her response. I do not advocate, nor would I advocate, keeping a marriage together that is harmful for a spouse or a child. The well-being of the child is of supreme importance and is often put in jeopardy both when parents don't esteem each other and their commitments highly enough and, as Susan suggests, when the marriage becomes an unhealthy trap.

The quality of family life is of utmost importance to me, as I sense it is to Susan. I *do not* admire families that fail to lovingly and respectfully care for each other. I am sorry Susan felt compelled to imply that I do.

I hope that Susan will carry on with her concern for wholesome family life, but do so with a more gracious spirit. *Sara Wenger Shenk, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*

From our mission workers

Hiroshima, Japan—As a Mennonite church in Hiroshima, we continue to work at what it means to be Mennonite Christians in this city. In addition to home meetings, we now meet for worship once a month in a room we have rented in a public hall, in order to make room for more members of the various friends and neighbors to share our faith in Jesus Christ. At times it's hard not to get discouraged, but I think you, too, would be impressed with the faithfulness of the core group. We're also working together to find out what it means to be Christians in this society. Specifically, for some church members, being Christians in this society has meant working for abolishing the death penalty in Japan.

Michiyo Umekita from Miyazaki Prefecture was a part of our group while she was a student at Hiroshima University and is close to our hearts. She was baptized in Takajo this summer and is now in Lima, Ohio, for six months helping in Japanese language classes and Bible study for Japanese housewives. Our church is excited about her experience.

The women's group of the church is moving forward with new energy and a new name—Shion no Kai. "Shion" is the word for Zion and also the name of a lovely little wildflower; the name has given us a stronger sense of identity. We are studying Matthew. In addition to our work here in Hiroshima, Bob still goes to Tokyo Christian University about twice a month to teach two courses per term. Since last April, Alice Ruth has been leading a group of women in translating a Bible study/devotional book by April Yamasaki. *Bob and Alice Ruth Ramseyer (see the newsclip on page 18 of this issue)*

Bogotá, Colombia—We praise God for God's faithfulness. There have been some difficult times adjusting here, but all in all the experience is positive. We are learning so much from being around this culture. It's a joke to think that we come here to help people know how to live better. Of course we can offer them a life of better quality through God and Jesus, but I would do that wherever I live. The prevailing thought among us North Americans is that we have it all together and need to teach other countries how to live better. Based on what I have learned so far from the people here, I will go away from here a much richer person. There are so many things to learn that one would never pick up in a book. Probably one of the biggest lessons I will take from South America is how people should be treated. Around here, it is expected that one acknowledges others if one is around them.

I am learning from the families here that do not have homes. I hope I never become hardened to the fact that there are so many homeless people here. It breaks my heart to see mothers and their babies walking the streets, picking through others' garbage. Children ages 3, 4 and up are pushing or pulling heavy carts that roll on ball bearings. Of course they have help, but they are always dirty, and my heart cries for their social, emotional, physical, mental and, most of all, spiritual health.

I'm giving away some of my clothes here. I feel guilty having seven pairs of pants, when someone comes to my door asking for pants, and I tell them I don't have any for them. I've given away two pairs of mine and went out and bought another pair for a young man. *Frank Soto-Albrecht*

Profile

60 years of service

A celebration of Dick and Mary Rempel's work in Christian publishing

Karen Graber Andres

Part I
Now here is *The Mennonite Story*, you see,
of two *People of Mission* from Mission, B.C.
In June and August of '63
began Dick and Mary, respectively.
They left their *House at the Back of the Lot*
because *This We Believe* is what the Lord taught.
They came to Newton their *Life to Share*,
and brought *Many Gifts* to the conference there.
They had a *Focus on Faith*, but only *Time Will Tell*
if *Your Abilities and the Church* would serve you well.
But their trip was delayed because of a hitch:
a misspelled word on the birth certificate—"Diedrich."
Now how could that be?
There was a "d" in the middle instead of a "t."
Well, they finally got their visas,
and with *A Reason to Sing* they were on their way
Side by Side—With—Prayers for Everyday!

Part 2
Now when they arrived it is plain to see
that they became *Encircled* with responsibility.
Mary's job for 30 years has been
copy editor for *Bibelstudien*.
Say what is required for such a task?
"Sie sprechen gut Deutsche." So sorry I asked.
She also graded curriculum at length,
So we thank her for enduring with such *A Quiet Strength*.
And *For Those Who Teach*, if it's counsel you seek
just ask Mary—she manages kids five days a week.

Part 3
Now about "Diedrich" (and that's with a "t")
and his duties since 1963.
His first title in this position you'll see
was established as Sunday school secretary.
But in '66 he was *Learning to Lead*
as he became manager of F and LP.
He felt as though he was *Born Giving Birth*
to the tasks at hand and all their worth.
There was planning and organizing
(and fixing machines),
and staffing and directing
(and fixing machines),
and "controlling the procurement and distribution of Christian literature and the services for central offices to carry out the objectives and policies of the Board of Education and Publication"
(and FIXING MACHINES).
Das Machinen is nodt for gefingerpoken und mitengrabben. Ist ezy for brekken das springenwerks, blowenfusen mit loudisch popen und spitzensparken. Ist nix gewerken by dumkoffs! Das rubbernekken sighdtseern und stupidisch goofoffers hast relaren, kipp hands in pokket und vatch das stoffa kumoudt.
Now very few couples in their *Preparation for Marriage*
have a chance to work together in a job they both cherish.
But Dick and Mary's lives came *Full Circle*, it comes to mind,
with a trip to Russia in September '89.
They were *Becoming God's Peacemakers* at the Moscow Book Fair
while *Finding Faith and Fellowship* with the people there.
Another highlight for Dick, if you take a look,
was the introduction last year of *Hymnal: A Worship Book*.
But that's not all—for before that hymnal book of song
there were other *Church Music in Worship* books that came along.
There were:
Anhang Zum Gesangbuch und *Gesangbuch Der Mennoniten*.
Don't forget *The Mennonite Hymnary* and *The Mennonite Hymnal* (last but not leasten).
FLP has been, it is fair to say,
A House for Our Hymns all along the way.

Norma Johnson

60 year's hire: *Dick and Mary relax*

Part 4
Now besides their work, they have had a hand
in foster parenting all over the land.
Like *Brothers in Deed to Brothers in Need*
on a *Journey With Justice* they have planted many seeds.
If you're *Young or Old or In-Between*,
there's a lesson from Dick and Mary that we've seen.
You can hike, you can bike, you can live very thrifty.
Oh yes, be assured that there's *Life After 50*.

Part 5
Now Mary and Dick, who have *A Faith Refined by Fire*,
have been *Weathering the Storm* for 60 year's hire.
We say, *Peace Be With You* in the work still to come.
For when you *Have the Mind of Christ* there is much that can be done.
So *Praise God From Whom* all blessings flow,
for God is the key, and this we know.
To be *Alive in the Risen Christ* is our mutual goal.
You deserve a big "thank you," we all would agree.
You have weathered the storm, so we shout, *Jubilee*!

Karen Graber Andres, Elbing, Kan., is a former co-worker of Dick and Mary's in Faith & Life Press.

The italicized words refer to titles published by Faith & Life Press.

News

Project translates Bible commentary into Russian

Elkhart, Ind. (MCC)—This Easter will mark the completion of a 15-year project to translate William Barclay's 34-volume Bible commentary into Russian.

The $1 million U.S./$1.3 million Can. project began in 1978.

Presses in Odessa, Russia, will finish printing the 18-volume Old Testament commentary in April. The 16 volumes of New Testament commentary came off the press in 1986.

Marvin Ziegenhagel, a Soviet emigrant who had moved to Germany when the project began, singlehandedly translated the entire commentary. "My spirituality has changed," he said after completing the translation. "The whole Jewish/Christian world has become a new world for me. I learned the language of each world, became more mature in both of them."

Three organizations—Mennonite Central Committee, the All Union Council of Evangelical Christian Baptists and the Baptist World Alliance—sponsored the project.

MCC supplied most of the staff for the project coordination. Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, Pa., printed the New Testament series and typeset the Old Testament series.

Many people, including MCC board members, worried at times that the project was wasting church money, says Walter Sawatsky, professor of church history at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and coordinator of the translation project. He says some thought the Soviet authorities would refuse permission to import the translated commentaries.

But, he says, as answer to prayer,

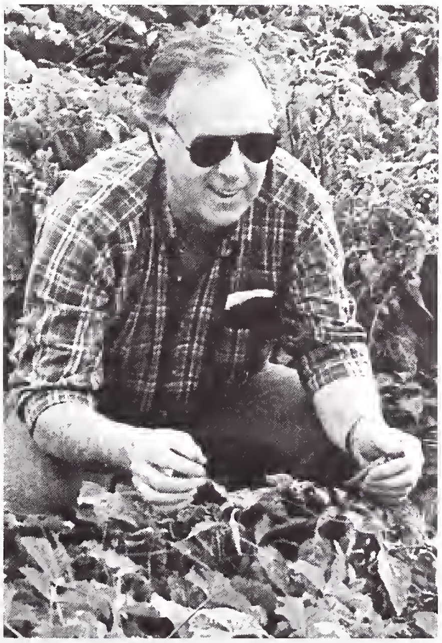
MCC sends first trade mission

Winnipeg (MCC)—The first Mennonite Central Committee trade mission visited the West Bank and Gaza Strip Jan. 16-23.

The 17 entrepreneurs, mostly Canadian, who took part in the mission designed it to blend business and peacemaking. Participants represented businesses such as building supplies, lumber, window and door manufacturers, agriculture, travel and tourism. They studied the vitality and potential of the Palestinian business community. Harold Dueck, vice president of sales for Wilmar Windows in Winnipeg, and MCC West Bank country representative John F. Lapp led the mission.

MCC's history of working in partnership with the business community in the Occupied Territories goes back to 1952, when the agency helped organize the Palestinian Needlework Project among refugees and village women.

MCC business-related ventures since then have included helping farmers market produce in Europe, founding a school for business training and helping create the Economic Development Group, a revolving loan fund to help Palestinians start small businesses.
Marcus Shantz



John F. Lapp (MCC)

New ways to grow: *Fred Wall, Winnipeg, looks at experimental hot pepper plants in the West Bank near Jericho.*

Inside the news

Men in leadership discuss sex discrimination / p. 14

Canadian council questions need for three conferences / p. 15

Haitian military confronts Christian Peacemaker Team / p. 16

Fresno gets help for intensive outreach / p. 17

Christian Peacemaker Teams is organizing a delegation to Haiti March 31-April 10. The delegation will study the Haitian crisis, engage in public witness and work to raise awareness across North America upon return. Interested people should contact CPT, Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680, telephone/fax (312) 455-1199.

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A draft of the new Confession of Faith of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) is now available. Delegates will vote on a final draft at Wichita '95, the upcoming GC and MC conference. Churches received a copy of the confession in January. The Confession of Faith Committee has asked for responses by June 15. The February issue of *Builder* introduces the 24 articles in the confession for further study. Additional copies may be ordered for $1.95 (U.S.) from Faith & Life Press, (800) 743-2484, or $2.75 (Canadian) from Faith & Life Press Canada, (204) 888-6781. The committee is also translating the draft into Spanish. To order, call (316) 283-5100. The Congregational Resources Board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada will also translate portions into French, Laotian, Hmong and Vietnamese. To order these, contact the Conference of Mennonites in Canada at (204) 888-6781. *Der Bote* is currently printing the articles in German in a series of installments.

Peace Community Church—Mennonite, Clovis, Calif., celebrated its fifth anniversary on Jan. 23.

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Didsbury, Alta., will host its first relief auction July 8-9 to benefit Mennonite Central Committee.

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Randolph Peters, a Winnipeg composer of Mennonite background, has written an opera, "Nosferatu," that explores the Dracula story as political allegory. The setting, according to a *Globe and Mail* review, is "a town at the edge of a hydroelectric project, where the citizenry is preparing to flood the territory of a despised indigenous tribe." The main character is a dictator and manipulator who is nevertheless the only protection the tribe has. Peters told *Globe and Mail* the character was based on Vlad the Impaler, the 15th-century Romanian nobleman who inspired Dracula. "He used terror to control his citizens and protect them from the invading Turks. He was seen as a hero, but he was brutal." The opera premiered with the Canadian Opera Company Dec. 8, 1993. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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The Mennonite Board of Education of the Mennonite Church focused on the church-building function of Mennonite education at its meetings Jan. 6-8 in Elkhart, Ind. "We are in transition from a Christian to a non-Christian culture," said John E. Toews, dean and professor of New Testament at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif. "Our young people are biased by the culture against faith. ... Church schools should become more churchlike, even congregational." Marion Deckert, higher education secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church, told the group, "No institution is better suited to make the Anabaptist vision compelling to our young people than [that of] our church schools."

Perestroika came to Russia by the time the New Testament series was finished.

More than 12,000 sets of the New Testament commentaries have been distributed to Russian Evangelical pastors and to Orthodox priests and laity. *From reports by Walter Sawatsky*

Church heads study violence against women

Mt. Pleasant, Pa. (*Gospel Herald*)—The title was awkward and, for many invited to participate, a bit scary: "Men Working with Women to End Violence Against Women."

The participants included 33 male leaders from the Mennonite Church, the General Conference Mennonite Church and Brethren in Christ: heads of agencies, conference officials, churchwide board members, college and seminary presidents. They met at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center Jan. 11-14 for 3 1/2 days of input and discussion.

A team of four from Atlanta served as consultation leaders. They run an awareness training organization called Men Against Violence. Eight Mennonite women "consultants" planned and directed four worship services in addition to observing and commenting on what they saw.

The by-invitation-only consultation on men and violence was the second in two years for Mennonite church leaders. The 1992 meeting, held in Divide, Colo., spurred action toward statements from both GCMC and MC assemblies on the issue of violence against women.

In telephone interviews with *Gospel Herald*, six male and five female participants described what they saw as the event's importance. Their observations follow, with women's voices in italic type and men's in standard type:

As a woman I am used to sharing my deepest feelings about gender issues with other women, but I'm careful what I say when men are present. I had no idea how unfamiliar it would feel to talk about these issues with men listening.

The event gathered a group of significant leaders, male leaders, and helped them see reality with new eyes—a reality that systematically diminishes women and other minorities and that ensures a place of privilege and power for those in a place of dominance.

Here were all these head honchos saying, "I don't have any power." I wanted to say, You do! Claim it. Own it, and do something. I believe they as Mennonites are so trained to see themselves as servants that they deliberately block from their minds the fact that the roles they have are positions of power.

The great amount of anxiety men brought to the meeting was shown in physical symptoms: headaches and stomachaches.

I'm afraid of upsetting men, of being seen as a troublemaker or as an angry woman. I don't want to lose my voice in the church. But here I was, feeling strongly and being honest and seeing in the circle around me men who have the power to invite me to sit on churchwide boards, to write articles, to join their faculties.

> **"Mennonites are so trained to see themselves as servants that they deliberately block from their minds the fact that the roles they have are positions of power."**

We have to work at overcoming some of those practices that tend to protect male abusers. At the consultation we were pushed on the question of whether confidentiality is not really protecting men who are abusing women. Confidentiality feeds into secrecy and silence about these matters, and ends up weakening the accountability of the church community toward the abusers.

"In the closing worship service we asked the men to anoint each other's faces with water as a symbol of the tears of their sisters, as an act of standing with us in our pain. Some of the men stood there and sobbed. This was very healing for the women. Only when men stand in solidarity with us, when our pain can become theirs, too, will we begin to walk together toward healing and renewal."

Article by Cathleen Hockman with J. Lorne Peachey

Canadian council questions need for conferences

Winnipeg (CMC)—Seventy-five delegates attended the annual Council of Boards sessions of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) held here Feb. 3-5.

One question came up at several meetings: Do we really need three levels of conference? "We risk losing all credibility if we don't simplify our structures," said one participant. This sentiment came strongest from delegates from British Columbia, some of whom feel the wider conferences are not taking their concerns seriously.

On a positive note, CMC reported that it made 96.5 percent of its 1993 budget, more than projections had suggested. The finance committee is projecting a modest increase of 2 percent in askings for 1994.

Communication: The CMC General Board met Feb. 2. In response to concerns that more CMC members should receive conference information, the General Board decided that the CMC insert, which now appears monthly in the *Mennonite Reporter*, will be distributed in bulk to congregations west of Ontario. It will remain as an insert in eastern Canada.

Earlier a task force on communications had recommended that CMC consider publishing its own paper. Follow-up discussion by General Board moved in the direction of continuing the insert, but in a revised magazine format. The $17,000 cost to print extra copies and do bulk mailing of the insert will be shared by all CMC boards.

Fund raising: Ron Loeppky, director of church promotion and fund raising, indicated that $337,000 had been raised for a $1.5 million project to build a recreation center and lecture hall for Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) in Winnipeg, "probably not enough for construction to begin in October 1994, as planned," Loeppky said. The project may need to be scaled down.

CMBC had put forth a proposal to open its own development office, but in the interests of presenting a united front for all conference work, the General Board decided that one person will promote the work, raise the funds and do the stewardship edu-

Committee and program board action

Here are reports from the program boards and committees of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada:

Native Ministries: Facing a tightening budget, NM will retain all current staff. They are pursuing the option of having their workers find part-time employment to become more financially independent.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College: The board, faculty and students at CMBC are jointly developing a sexual harassment policy for the school.

The board considered a summary document of the school's "experience-based education" programs which are being strengthened. Plans are under way to appoint a half-time communications director, using funds previously designated for secretarial staff.

Congregational Resources Board: Publications will include a "Profile of Canadian Mission Projects" to rekindle enthusiasm for local mission-outreach work. Also, translation work has been broadened from only Chinese.

Emphasis on Chinese ministries work will expand to Asian ministries, a joint assignment with the General Conference's Commission on Home Ministries, staffed by Hugh and Janet Sprunger.

The board moved to pursue dialogue with the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada and provide funds to support a part-time worker in peace and justice.

Committee on Ministerial Leadership: The issue of crossing sexual boundaries consumes a great deal of energy for each conference minister, said Gary Harder, committee chair. "We are learning slowly and painfully how best to process this issue," he said, "and receive criticism no matter how we proceed."

Canadian Women in Mission: "We surpassed our budget," said new president Ruby Harder. "That's a good way for me to begin."

The Peace, Service and Justice Committee of the Central District Conference is sponsoring the workshop "Conflict Resolution Skills for Global Citizens" April 22-23 at Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship. Bob Williamson, associate director of Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, will lead the workshop. Contact the fellowship at 1301 East McMillan St., Cincinnati, OH 45206, (513) 281-4452.

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Bluffton (Ohio) College will host Elderhostel June 12-18. Elderhostel is a network of educational institutions offering short-term residential academic programs for older adults. Classes this year include "Telling Our Stories: Vignettes of the Past," a study of letters and diaries in preparation to write your life story; "Here's Mud in Your Eye," an opportunity to create stoneware, and "Electricity: the Final Frontier," a study in electricity. Cost, including housing and meals, is $315 for the week-long program. Contact Don or Nancy Schweingruber at Elderhostel, Box 1058, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817.

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Abdul-Rasheed Muhammed was sworn in Dec. 3, 1993, as the first Muslim chaplain of the U.S. armed forces. He reported for duty Jan. 10. Muhammed, 41, is an African-American associated with the segment of Black Muslims who have relinquished black nationalism in favor of a more traditional form of Islam. According to government statistics, 2,500 members of the armed forces identify themselves as Muslim. Since recruits are not required to report their religious affiliation, the figure could be higher. Of the 3,150 chaplains now active in the armed forces, Muhammad is the first who is neither Christian nor Jewish. (*The Christian Leader*)

Ashland (Ohio) Theological Seminary will host the Believers' Church Conference June 1-4. The conference will focus on the theme "The Lord's Supper: Believers' Church Perspectives." Register by May 2. Contact the seminary at 910 Center St., Ashland, OH 44805.

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Delegates from the Pacific District Conference-South of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Southwest Mennonite Conference of the Mennonite Church met Jan. 15 and gave unanimous support to bylaws for their newly formed joint body. The new integrated conference is called the Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference. Duane Oswald, Integration Structures Committee chair, told delegates the bylaws are but a legal document that help in state relations. They do not make a conference, people do. "When these bylaws are approved I'm hoping we can set them on the shelf and not have to refer to them," he said. (*Pacific District Messenger*)

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Amish buggyman Elmer Eichler rescued expectant mother Josie Williams when her ambulance slid off an icy gravel road near Reading, Mich., Jan. 28. A four-wheel-drive truck had already failed to pull the ambulance from the ditch when Eichler and his two-horse team came along. "He said he had the shoes sharpened up so they would bite into the ice," said Walt Zinser, director of Reading's ambulance service. "Once we got them hooked up, they walked it right out." The ambulance made it to Hillsdale Community Health Center, about 80 miles southwest of Detroit, where Williams delivered a healthy son, Matthew. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

cation for the whole conference. CMBC will receive half the benefits of this project. The other 50 percent will be shared by the rest of the conference programs.

New ministry: Delegates at the summer conference in Waterloo encouraged General Board to pursue possible support of emerging churches in eastern Germany. Without any specific program or people in place, CMC already has received almost $15,000 for such an endeavor.

In discussion on congregations joining conference, there was strong affirmation that a new congregation automatically become a member of all three levels of conference.

Delegates also raised concerns about Bible education in CMC churches. There was strong support for a council or commission on higher education to decrease competition and promote all conference schools as options across Canada.

The summer conference this year will be July 6-10 in Clearbrook, B.C.

The program committee announced the theme as "Partnership in the Gospel" (Philippians 1:5). *Margaret Franz with notes by Colleen Braun-Janzen, Eileen Klassen Hamm, Helen Kruger, Dave Loewen, Dan Rempel*

New CMC structure begins this summer

New conference structures in the works since 1989 will start this summer.

- **General Board:** The board will become more of a coordinating body. It will drop most of its program and will add representatives of area conferences to its membership.
- **Ministries Commission:** Committees in three areas will comprise the commission: Native Ministries, International (currently European) Ministries and Church Planting.
- **Leadership Commission:** The commission will have a two-pronged emphasis: Pastoral Services (the current Committee on Ministerial Leadership) and Pastoral-Seminary Education.
- **Resources Commission:** The commission will remain as is except that church planting will shift to the Ministries Commission.
- **Higher education:** The future of a commission or council on higher education remains unclear.

Haitian soldiers confront peacemaker team

Chicago (CPT)—Haitian soldiers confronted Christian Peacemaker Teams members in St. Helen, Haiti, Feb. 7. At noon that day several dozen residents in the St. Helen's neighborhood of Jeremie in southwest Haiti had held a show of support for exiled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's return.

That same afternoon 10 heavily armed soldiers approached the church at St. Helen where four members of CPT are staying. CPT is part of an international presence established in Jeremie in October 1993 to deter violence there.

The soldiers trained their weapons on the gatekeeper, who ran to inform the CPT members. The soldiers were accompanied by two members of FRAPH, a national paramilitary organization that CPT reports is responsible for killing numerous civilians in the last several months.

The soldiers' spokesperson asked the team members if they endorsed the noon protest. When they responded noncommittally, he said that such activities disturbed the peace by "exciting the people too much."

He told the CPT members to "give a message to the people who made the noise. If they do this again, they will be arrested, and you will be arrested, too, because you will be accomplices in the act. The state does not accept this."

While the dialogue at the gate took place, two of the soldiers searched a nearby house, where friends of one of the Haitians who lives and works with the CPT members live. The soldiers threatened to arrest the young boy who was visiting the house.

St. Helen is a poor neighborhood targeted by the military because of its reluctance to support the military government. A grass-roots organization from the neighborhood made the first public call for Aristide to run for the presidency in 1990.

The members of the Christian Peacemaker Team currently staying in St. Helen are Joel Klassen, Kitchener, Ont.; Lena Siegers, Hamilton, Ont.; Miriam Maik, Wichita, Kan., and Kathleen Kern, Rochester, N.Y.

Fresno hosts church growth project

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—About seven years ago, only 65 people attended the Mennonite Community Church in Fresno, Calif.

Today an average of 120 people attend this congregation, which gave birth to two new churches in the last few years—the Hmong Community Church in Fresno and the Peace Community Church in Clovis, Calif.

If that's not enough, all three churches plus two from Reedley, Calif. —First Mennonite Church and Iglesia Vida Nueva—want to plant at least four churches in cooperation with the Pacific District Conference. They also want to offer job training and a microenterprise program for new immigrants.

As a result, the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church has decided to name the Fresno area as its first City on a Hill project.

City on a Hill is part of the Abraham and Sarah project, a CHM initiative involving new churches and new witness in peace and service. The Fresno-area churches will receive a one-time grant of $20,000 as well as staff support from CHM to help them achieve their church-planting and service goals. In 1995 a Canadian location will be named as a City on a Hill project.

"We have a large vision because that is the kind of vision God has. God calls us to do things and gives us the strength to accomplish them," said James Wenger, pastor of Mennonite Community Church.

"People are generally attracted to churches where they are wanted and needed," he said. "I believe that as we reach out to others we are more effective in helping ourselves."

"If all the church is doing is good works, so is the welfare department," said Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, co-pastor of Peace Community Church and evangelism and church development staff person for the Pacific District Conference. "Ministry and evangelism are meant to go hand in hand. That doesn't mean that people will have to pass through an evangelistic filter to be served."

"We wanted to contribute to a local vision that is holistic in its approach," said Lois Barrett, CHM executive secretary. "It is our hope that these City on a Hill projects will model how evangelism and service can come together for a powerful witness."

"If all the church is doing is good works, so is the welfare department."

Ruth-Heffelbower

Both Wenger and Ruth-Heffelbower expressed appreciation for CHM's support. "The infusion of money from the outside always helps," said Ruth-Heffelbower. "The truth is that Mennonites are spread pretty thin out here. All along we have had to rely on money from the east."

"It is a real encouragement when the denomination notices what we're trying to do," said Wenger.

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First Mennonite Church in San Francisco is now meeting at Golden Gate Lutheran Church. The congregation formerly met at Dolores Street Baptist Church, which burned down in August 1993.

• • •

The Council on Church and Media will hold its annual meeting May 12-14 in Toronto. Mennonite and Brethren communicators across North America will explore how organizations realize the value of communication to their overall mission. The conference is open to anyone interested in church and media. Contact Barth Hague, Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527.

• • •

The translation of the Bible into Samogho, the language spoken in Saraba, Burkina Faso, is causing a spiritual conflict in the village of Saraba, write mission workers Donna and Loren Entz. Mennonite mission workers are close to finishing the translation of Genesis. "We are awed at the responsibility of interpreting these stories in order that their meanings be made clear," they write. Their neighbor, whose father was the first Muslim in Saraba, said the stories would cause "a big religious confusion." The Entzes explained that they were not wanting to cause confusion or to force people to believe in Christianity. Yet they were also excited when their language helper, Sibiri, realized that the covenant that God made with Noah was with him, too. "With these few stories, we're already deep into a spiritual conflict, and there is very little we can do about it. So we plead with you to uphold this village in prayer," they write. Donna is a member of Fiske (Sask.) Church, and Loren is a member of Zion Church, Elbing, Kan.

Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

Eight women from the Hiroshima (Japan) Mennonite Church meet twice a month to work on translating *Remember Lot's Wife and Other Unnamed Women of the Bible* into Japanese. Mennonite mission worker Alice Ruth Ramseyer said she was impressed with this book by April Yamasaki of Clearbrook, B.C., because it "encourages women who are growing in the faith as well as those who are just beginning to learn about Christianity. It lifts up women without putting men down." The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church is giving $560 toward the project.

• • •

The Mennonite Disaster Service office in Los Angeles is open and ready for the business of earthquake cleanup. The office is located at the Iglesia Evangelica Bethel in North Hollywood; telephone (818) 763-1330. Project directors are Anne and Wes Heinrichs. Anyone wanting an update of MDS work in Los Angeles or to schedule volunteer time may phone the office. Volunteers from outside MDS Region IV will not be needed for several weeks, however, says Lowell Detweiler, MDS executive coordinator. MDS also opened a satellite office further north in Ventura County, in the town of Fillmore. The project directors at this location are Mary and Wilmer Leichty of Albany, Ore.

• • •

Karl Sommers of Mennonite Mutual Aid testified Feb. 4 before the Subcommittee on Health of the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee. Sommers shared background on MMA and pointed out the need for a provision that would allow MMA to operate under the Clinton plan. MMA reports that committee chair Pete Stark (D-Calif.) promised to support a provision that would allow MMA to serve Mennonites and other Anabaptist groups under a revised health-care system.

MINISTERS

Gail Berg has begun as minister of youth and Christian education at Niagara (Ont.) United Church.

Joan Blatz is beginning as pastor at Thompson (Man.) Church.

David and **Friedrun Dick** are serving as pastoral couple at First Church, Kelowna, B.C.

Robert Dyck is serving as associate pastor at Kelowna (B.C.) Gospel Fellowship.

Menno Ediger has begun as interim pastor of Hyde Park Church, Boise, Idaho.

Dennis Fehr is serving as pastor at Zion Church, Swift Current, Sask.

Doris Gascho, Shantz Church, Baden, Ont., has been appointed conference minister for the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, effective Sept. 1. She replaces **Herb Schultz**, who served as conference minister 13 years.

Gascho

Craig Hollands was installed as youth pastor at Eben-Ezer Church, Clearbrook, B.C., on Oct. 10, 1993.

Hugo Jantz was installed as pastor at Douglas Church, Winnipeg, on Dec. 5, 1993.

John Kulp has begun as pastor at Saucon Church, Coopersburg, Pa.

Terry and **Karen Martens Zimmerly** were ordained to pastoral ministry at Grace Church, Regina, Sask., on Nov. 28, 1993.

D.A. Raber is serving as interim pastor at Zion Church, Elbing, Kan.

Mike Regier was commissioned as youth and assistant pastor at Faith Church, Newton, Kan.

Leonard Reiss is serving as pastor at Mt. Olivet Church, Huron, S.D. He began November 1993, after serving as interim pastor there.

James Schellenberg was ordained as lay minister at Douglas Church, Winnipeg, on Nov. 21, 1993.

Willard Schrag has begun serving as pastor at Mennonite Church of Lehigh (Kan.) and Central Heights Church, Durham, Kan.

Al Sones has begun as pastor of adult ministries at East Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Laura Wiebe-Powell is serving as co-pastor at Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita, Kan.

Arthur Wiens is serving as co-pastor at Zion Church, Swift Current, Sask.

WORKERS

Mary Bender, Milverton (Ont.) Fellowship, began a one-year MCC term in March 1993 in Milverton, where she co-manages the New to You Thrift Shop.

Valerie Rose Carter, Cincinnati Fellowship and New Hope Church, Winnipeg, began a two-year MCC

Bender

Carter

D. Driedger

S. Driedger

M. Friesen

R. Friesen

Goerzen-Sheard

Guglar

Hoffman

Krahn

term in July 1993 in Winnipeg in community, economic and cross-cultural organization and development.

Darcy and **Sara Driedger**, Portage Church, Portage la Prairie, Man., are beginning a three-year MCC term in Bangladesh. Darcy will be working as a food technologist.

Merlin and **Rita Friesen**, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., began a two-year MCC term in December 1993 in Porcupine, S.D. Merlin works as a family practitioner and Rita serves as a community development worker.

Jamie Gerber, Crosshill Church, Millbank, Ont., began a two-year MCC term in September 1993 at MCC Ontario as an inventory coordinator for Self-Help Crafts.

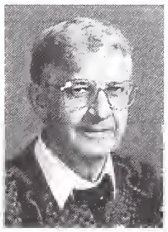
John Goerzen-Sheard, Waterloo (Ont.) North Church, began a two-year MCC term in July 1993 at MCC Ontario in computer services.

Danielle Guglar, Hamilton (Ont.) Church and Warden Woods Church, Scarborough, Ont., began a two-year MCC term in September 1993 in Toronto as coordinator of Toronto Ontario Opportunities for Learning and Service (TOOLS).

Martin

B. Neufeld

S. Neufeld



Peters

Schellenberg

Shantz

Audrey Hoffman, Hillcrest Church, New Hamburg, Ont., began a two-year MCC term in July 1993 in New Hamburg as a warehouse packer with Self-Help Crafts.

Rose Krahn, Wildwood Church, Saskatoon, began a two-year MCC term in October 1993 in Akron, Pa., as a computer operator and sales clerk for Self-Help Crafts.

Connie Lepp is serving as program director at Camp Squeah, Hope, B.C.

Alvin Martin, Hamilton (Ont.) Church, began a three-year MCC term in July 1993 in New Hamburg as an administrator for Self-Help Crafts.

Ben and **Susan Neufeld**, North Star Church, Drake, Sask., are beginning a four- month MCC term in Akron, Pa. Ben will be working at Self-Help Crafts warehouse, and Susan at Nav Jiwan International Tea Room.

Paul F. Peters, Grace Church, Steinbach, Man., is beginning a three-month MCC term in Cambodia as a physician.

Helen Schellenberg, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, is beginning a four-month MCC term in Akron, Pa., as a server at Nav Jiwan International Tea Room.

Lisa Shantz, Rockway Church, Kitchener, Ont., is beginning a four-month MCC term in Jamaica as a women's center counselor.

CRIME! IS THERE A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE?

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Program director and faculty in social work: Doctorate desired, master's degree in social work and at least two years of post-master's practice experience required. Responsibilities include overseeing and managing an accredited social work program and classroom teaching. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

Send resumé to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.**

Mennonite Mutual Aid has two openings in the information systems department. The people chosen for these positions will be responsible to analyze, design, develop and/or purchase business software for an AS/400 and PC-LAN environment.

1. **Programmer/Analyst-Project Leader.** Qualified candidates will have a bachelor's degree and at least two to five years of managerial, professional or technical experience in such areas as applications development, insurance, financial services, accounting, etc. This person will have strong skills in leadership, working with people, communications, planning and organizing. May also lead a team of people involved in the applications development activities mentioned above.

2. **Junior Programmer/Analyst**. To qualify, candidates must have or be in the process of completing a bachelor's degree in management information systems, business, finance, accounting, computer science, mathematics, etc. Candidates will also have potential to develop strong skills in leadership, working with people, communications, planning and organizing.

Applicants for both positions must pass an aptitude test. MMA offers an excellent, smoke-free working environment and a competitive benefit package. Send resumé to **Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Department, Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527-0483.**

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary seeks **voluntary service couple.** Man to do light maintenance, woman to do combination of day care, hosting, cooking, library or secretarial work. Short- and long-term possibilities available.

Contact **Virgil Claassen, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517-1999, (219) 295-3726,** by **May 1.** AMBS is an equal opportunity employer.

Director of libraries: Open summer or fall 1995. Oversees the Sadie Hartzler Library, which includes the Menno Simons Historical Library. Qualifications: MLS required. Second degree in theology or another content area desirable. Library and administrative experience essential, some knowledge of and experience with information technology essential. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

Send resumé to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.**

Director of Historical Committee for the **Mennonite Church.** Provide direction for heritage work of Historical Committee (an agency of the Mennonite Church's General Board): communicate heritage vision to enhance Mennonite identity, network and encourage people/programs related to Mennonite history, administer archival program in consultation with archivist, prepare budget/grant proposals. Applicant should know and appreciate Anabaptist-Mennonite history and faith, communicate effectively, display initiative and organizational skills, be able to work with inter-Mennonite agencies and groups, and be open to all ethnic groups, genders, ages. Salary approximately $34,000 plus benefits/travel. Complete job description available on request.

Send resumé with three references by **March 30** to **Arlin D. Lapp, 515 Oaklyn Ave., Harleysville, PA 19438.**

Geoffrey Oola has new-found hope for a record cassava crop this year.

By 1990 blight stunted more than 90 percent of the cassava plants in northern Uganda. As harvests dwindled church leaders asked MCC agriculturist Neil Rowe-Miller, of Goshen, Ind., to help them find ways to boost yields.

Neil experimented with Nigerian disease-resistant cassava varieties; church members planted samples in their fields. Together they measured results and discovered several new varieties that out-yielded local plants four to one.

Some 39 MCC agriculturists, like Neil, help farmers in 13 countries worldwide increase food production, raise animals and plant trees.

MCC currently needs 16 additional agriculturists. If you, or someone you know, would like to serve with MCC, call Personnel Services (717) 859-1151; in Canada, (204) 261-6381.

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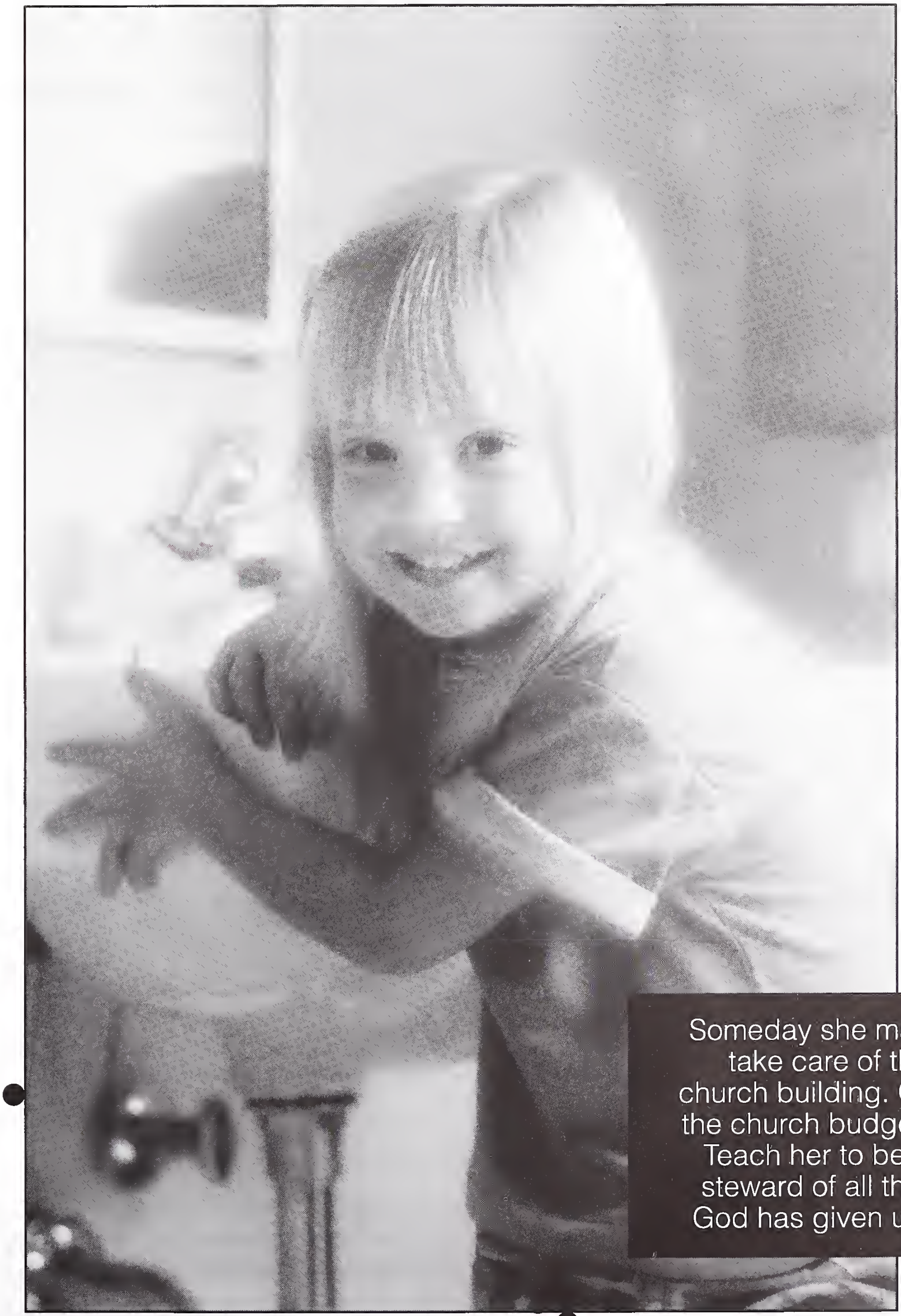

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Reviews

FILMS

Resurrecting memory

Schindler's List, *written by Steven Zaillian, produced by Steven Spielberg, Gerald R. Molen and Branco Lustig, directed by Steven Spielberg*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor

A candle lights up the darkness, and a line of people place stones on a hero's grave. These two scenes, both shot in color, frame the black-and-white nightmare of the story this film tells.

Already acclaimed by many as the film of the year, *Schindler's List* is a heartrending, harrowing look at the Holocaust. It is Spielberg's masterpiece. He makes brilliant use of the camera in framing shots and viewing scenes from different perspectives. A genius at storytelling, his pacing here is just right, as he blends drama with brutal realism. The film runs more than three hours but feels much shorter.

Oskar Schindler was a German Catholic businessman, a member of the Nazi Party, who saw an opportunity to make money in Cracow, Poland, after the Nazis occupied the city and made it illegal for Jews to own property. He began a factory and used Jewish workers because their labor cost less than would Polish workers.

Based on a true story, the film tells how Schindler (Liam Neeson), while remaining a womanizer, a war profiteer, a black-market dealer, a lover of cognac and parties with his Nazi friends, ends up saving almost 1,200 Jewish lives. Motivated at first mostly by greed, he slowly realizes—with the help of his Jewish bookkeeper (Ben Kingsley)—that having Jews work for him also saves them from the murdering whims of the Nazis. Gradually he takes increasing risks to save as many Jews as he can. Today, despite his unheroic qualities, he is recognized by Jewish leaders as a hero.

Newsweek

Granters of life: *Neeson and Kingsley*

All the actors in this film should be commended. The film's realism makes it painful enough. It's hard to imagine playing the roles of prisoners or of Nazi guards. But the performance that stands out is that of Ralph Fiennes as the complex, psychopathic Nazi camp commandant. He makes the character evil, but it's a human rather than a stereotyped evil.

Details stand out that reinforce the realism—and the horror—of the film. There is one spot of color in the main story, as Neeson's eyes follow the fate of a little girl with a reddish coat trying to escape the butchery of the German troops in Cracow. In another scene, confiscated possessions of Jews taken away to concentration camps are piled onto tables in a warehouse. On one table are hundreds of photos—of weddings, of families. We witness the destruction of memories.

Schindler's List can serve as a way to overcome that destruction of memory. We must see the horror, hear the names of many of the victims and feel the agony of one people's attempt to destroy another. And in this film we can witness the example of a flawed man who simply acted decently at a time when decency was rare.

BOOKS

Social sexuality

Sexual Character: Beyond Technique to Intimacy *by Marva J. Dawn (Eerdmans, 1993, 172 pages)*

Reviewed by Sharon Sawatzky, Toronto

Scholarship about sexuality offers to bring clarity to the personal and political agonies of many sexual issues. In *Sexual Character: Beyond Technique to Intimacy*, Marva J. Dawn aims to contribute to that clarity by offering "new thinking" about human sexuality.

Sexual Character is aptly named. The foundation of the author's solution to the sexual dilemmas of the 1990s is a re-emphasis on character. On the basis of the belief that sexual behavior arises out of character, which in turn reinforces the character, Dawn offers an "ethics of character." While grounded in the biblical commandments, the ethics of character focus not

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on rules but on the kind of people we want to be.

Underlying Dawn's development of this ethic is a distinction between social and genital sexuality. Society's emphasis on genital stimulation alienates us from each other, hinders our capacities for genuine intimacy and creates a voice that results in distortions of sexual intimacy, exploitation and violence. It is in the nurturing of social (nongenital) sexuality that the biblical, and thus the church's, response to the void is found. The concept of social sexuality thus provides the framework for the issues the book explores.

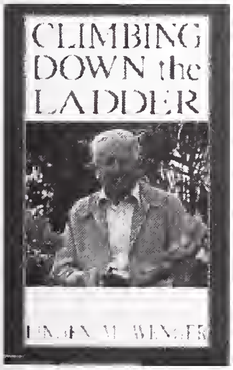
In *Sexual Character* Dawn reiterates a conservative theological perspective followed by examples, frequently from her life, of its application to personal and church life. While potentially useful to some, it does not accomplish her goal of new thinking. The resources provided in *Sexual Character* seem insufficient for that complex and urgent process.

How to retire

Climbing Down the Ladder *by Linden M. Wenger (Good Books, 1993, 183 pages)*

Reviewed by John W. Gaeddert, North Newton, Kan.

Climbing Down the Ladder offers helpful reading for those anticipating retirement. Much preparation goes into climbing up the ladder to the apex of one's profession, with the accompanying power, prestige and financial security. One must also prepare for the time when these accomplishments can be graciously handed over to those who follow.



Linden M. Wenger, retired pastor, seminary professor and conference leader, shares both from his heart and mind insights to foster meaningful older years. He holds that the quality of life we live is up to us: "One's individual philosophy of life and personal faith will determine the quality of those retirement years more than physical circumstances," he writes.

I appreciate the biblical accounts Wenger uses to address subjects. In a practical way he writes of the realities of older people: the meaning of retirement, management of finances, illnesses, loneliness and denial, the appreciation of family, new opportunities, making peace with death. He helps us see what is happening and how we can find inner and outer resources to draw upon.

The book gives examples of opportunities for involvement and emphasizes the importance of retaining the gift of our personal identity in the various involvements.

The preface begins with two pivotal ideas in the book: "Everybody wants to live a long time, but nobody wants to be old" and, "Most people are just about as happy as they make up their minds to be." We are helped by this book to "climb down the ladder" as graciously and joyfully as possible. Retirement does not take away opportunities for growth.

The book is very readable with large print, understandable concepts and personal examples.

Resources

- **Who Are the Mennonites?**, a brochure describing Mennonite beliefs, is available for 25 cents U.S./35 cents Can. each from Faith & Life Press, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (800) 743-2484, or 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781.
- **I Am Somebody God Loves** by Phyllis Bishop, Eleanor Snyder and Jock Tolmay (Faith & Life Press, 1994, $29.95 U.S./$38.95 Can.), the third installment in the Living Stones Collection, uses Old Testament characters to show how God loves and cares for all people. For ages 3 to grade eight; suitable in a variety of settings.
- **Peace book covers** are available for students. The Ohio Conference of the Mennonite Church, with support from local Mennonite organizations, produced these book covers as an alternative to the free book covers offered by the U.S. military. The covers are being sold for 5 cents each. For an order form showing the three cover designs, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Susan Mark Landis, 11885 Keener Drive, Orrville, OH 44667, (216) 683-0976. Orders and payments must be received by April 30.
- **Spring/Easter cards** for congregational outreach are available from Mennonite Board of Missions Media Ministries. They can be imprinted with a congregation's name and address, along with a brief message or invitation. For details and sample card, call (800) 999-3534.
- **Shared Burdens: Stories of Caring Practices Among Mennonites** by Sue V. Schlabach and Glen A. Roth (Good Books, 1993, $6.95 U.S.) explores how the traditional practice of mutual aid has been adapted to today's world.
- **Bridging the Gap: Evangelism, Development and Shalom** by Bruce Bradshaw (MARC, 1993, $11.95 U.S.) examines the concepts of creation, redemption and shalom, showing how these affect Christian mission. To order call (800) 777-7752 (U.S.) or (818) 303-8811.
- **Reliving the Passion** by Walter Wangerin Jr. (Zondervan, 1993, two 60-minute audiocassettes, $12.99 U.S.) recounts the final week of Jesus' life as recorded in the Gospel of Mark.
- **Children for Sale** (Church World Service, Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515, 30 cents U.S. each, or 4/$1) is a four-page study guide exploring the growth of child prostitution into a multibillion dollar international industry. Includes facts, stories, photos, prayers and actions.
- **The Changing Shape of World Mission** by Bryant L. Myers (MARC, 1993, $5.95 U.S.) contains charts, graphs and statistics on the state of the church and challenges to global witness. Also available in slides or overhead transparencies. To order call (800) 777-7752 (U.S.) or (818) 303-8811.
- **Jesus and Faith: A Conversation on the Work of John Dominic Crossan**, Jeffrey Carlson and Robert A. Ludwig, editors (Orbis Books, 1994, $18.95 U.S.), addresses questions of historical studies and theology raised by Crossan's book *The Historical Jesus*.

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Editorial

Staying alive

The church must pass on its faith or it dies. And while we need to bring people into our churches, we must also nurture their faith—as well as our own—or there will be no church. Christian education is one of the key elements in such nurture.

Visitors have come to my congregation and asked about Sunday school. Parents of young children are especially drawn to church so that their children receive some instruction about God. Other adults are looking for places to connect with other Christians to discuss issues critical to their faith.

Sunday school may draw people to church, but does it keep them? Many young adults connect with their brothers and sisters in Christ elsewhere and at other times. Sunday school is too boring or does not relate to "real" issues. Others come to Sunday school because that's what they've always done.

Within our adult Sunday school classes you'll find people who love intellectual debates, others who want to discuss feelings, still others who want to do something together, and those who sit quietly, afraid they'll be asked to talk.

How do we nurture our faith together when we come with such diverse desires and expectations? How do we attract people of various ages or people who don't feel they have the time to give an hour to Sunday school? How do smaller congregations—like my own—meet these varying demands? These are among the challenges our churches face. And if we do not give Christian education adequate attention, we will fail to attract new people and may lose people from among us.

Robert Raikes began what we call Sunday school in 18th-century Britain to reach out to poor children whose parents were in jail, often because of debts. While its character has changed, we still face the dilemma of how to train children and adults in Christian values. Increasingly we will encounter people with little knowledge of the Bible, of Christian belief. Our culture is essentially secular, and the task of living a faith counter to that culture becomes more and more difficult.

The Lord commanded Israel to "keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away" (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). Living counter to our secular culture means keeping the words of the Lord in our hearts and reciting them at home and away.

Christian education is a monumental, lifelong task and needs to occur more often than one hour per week. And, as Charles Watson says in this issue (page 4), it needs to speak to our everyday life.

This sounds hugely important, but it can also be fun. Sunday school classes vary greatly, and good ones are flexible to meet the needs of their members. I enjoy the adult class in my church. We tackle various topics, often studying a book. Last fall we went through the book of Galatians, then covered most of Deborah Tannen's book *You Just Don't Understand: Men and Women in Conversation*, which provided stimulating and relevant discussion. We've just completed two months of intergenerational Sunday school. In March the adult class begins discussing the new confession of faith.

McDonalds: I've heard of classes that have potlucks together. A group in Kansas City, Kan., goes to films, then discusses them. Another group meets on Sunday morning at McDonalds. I've heard from a number of churches that use *The Mennonite* for their Sunday school class. One church even asked if we produce a study guide. (We don't, but we'd like to hear if others might be interested in such a guide.)

Recently our office celebrated the release of sample packets of *Jubilee*, the new children's curriculum that will be available for this fall. (Congregations may order sample packets from Faith & Life Press, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.) The material looks inviting, creative, accessible. One person, who does not teach Sunday school, said, "This almost makes me want to teach."

We need to ask ourselves, Who influences our children? Who influences our thinking? Our Christian education program is one place to put our time and energy. Otherwise, our ability to live faithfully in a secular culture will weaken—and may die. *Gordon Houser*

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 06
MARCH 22, 1994

Inside

The problem with confession / p. 11

How to use retirement funds for charity / p. 12

Integration committee makes recommendations / p. 13

CHRIST IS RISEN!

HE IS NOT HERE

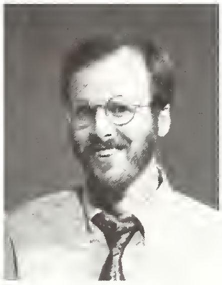
- **Whatever happened to resurrection art? (see page 3)**
- **Easter comes early for Imogene (see page 6)**

Prologue

On their way to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus, Mark's Gospel tells us, the three women wondered who would roll away the stone for them. When they arrived, they found the stone already rolled away from the entrance to the tomb. A young man said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here" (Mark 16:6).

Out of that empty tomb came the greatest news of history: Jesus is risen. Easter is the preeminent time of the year for Christians to rejoice in Christ's victory over death. A group called the Fellowship of Merry Christians believes Christians are usually too dour. The group publishes a delightful periodical called *The Joyful Noiseletter*, which always includes many jokes as well as news about ways Christians are celebrating God's goodness. They also help organize Easter Monday services, which include jokes and storytelling to celebrate Christ's fooling the devil by rising from the grave.

Use the picture of the risen Christ (page 4) to help you rejoice. Or learn from Imogene about God's abundant, undeserved grace (pages 6-7).



Marlene Kropf helps us think about confession (page 11), and J.B. Miller offers tips on using retirement funds for charity (page 12).

May you all find ways to rejoice this season. *gh*

Next issue: Faithfulness and the law

Cover: Photo by RNS

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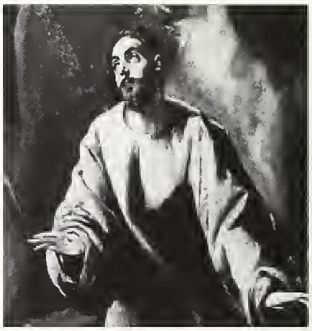

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The Easter Laugh

Whatever happened to resurrection art?

Cal Samra

My wife, Rose, and I have poured over many collections of religious art, and we have been astonished by the lack of representations of the most joyful event in Christian history: the resurrection of Jesus.

Although a few artists, like Raphael, have put a trace of a smile on the infant Jesus, we searched in vain for a painting of a joyful adult Christ prior to the mid-20th century.

And we cannot even find him in the depictions of the most joyous occasions in his life—the Transfiguration, when "his face shone like the sun" (Matthew 17:1-3), the joyous entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and the resurrection, with its victory over death.

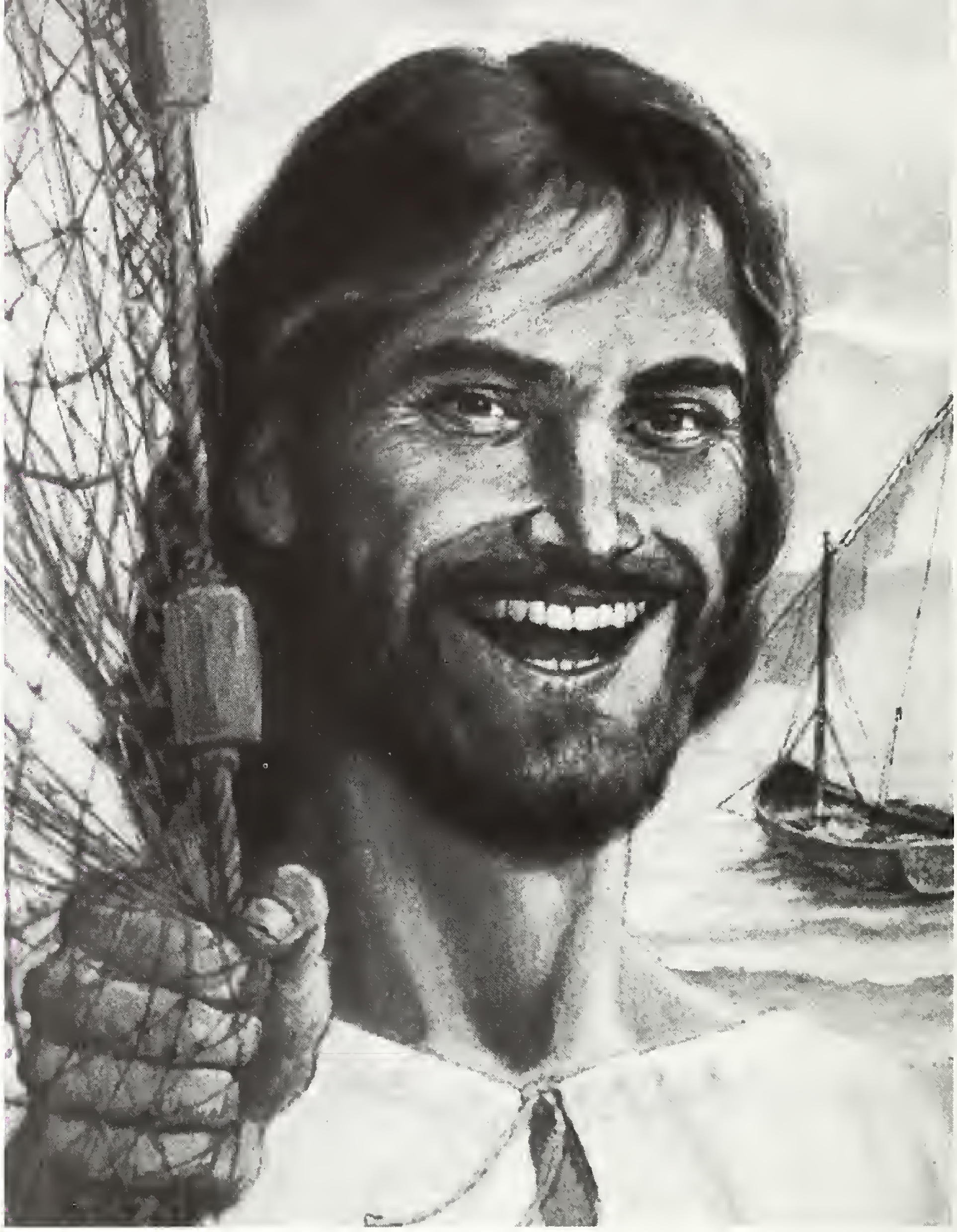
Much of the artwork of churches of all denominations has focused on the passion and crucifixion of Jesus. Artists have tended to shy away from representations of the resurrection, and those few who have attempted it have captured none of its dazzling beauty, glory and joy—God's great last laugh on the devil.

'Fun nun': Sr. Mary Christelle Macaluso of the College of St. Mary in Omaha, Neb., believes our sense of God has been misshaped by joyless depictions of God. Sr. Mary Christelle, also known as "the fun nun," observes that in much religious art, "God looks like he's going to bite you."

Many representations of Jesus, past and present, depict Jesus—the Messiah, whose message was "Be of good cheer"—as a tormented depressive. The gospels, however, tell us clearly that Jesus, far from being a depressive, was a healer of depressives. Jesus' presence, both in his earthly body and in his resurrected body, brought joy to multitudes.

If the New Testament is filled with references to joy, gladness and rejoic-

If the New Testament is filled with references to joy, gladness and rejoicing, why until recently were there no representations of a joyful Christ—especially a joyful risen Christ?



© 1990 Fellowship of Merry Christians

ing, why until recently were there no representations of a joyful Christ—especially a joyful risen Christ? It is a mystery.

Amos Wilder wrote, "It could well be that the lack of images to shape and motivate contemplation of the resurrection has stopped many from celebrating that mystery profoundly in their prayers and from becoming fully engaged in it."

It also may be another reason why Easter celebrations have faded away in many denominations. Christmas, enriched by its vast and lovely artwork, is celebrated extensively, while Easter, comparatively poor in resurrection artwork, is barely noticed.

Since its organization in 1986, the Fellowship of Merry Christians has strived to give Christians symbols of the resurrection to help them renew their faith in the resurrection.

One of them is Jack Jewell's painting "The Risen Christ by the Sea." Artist Jewell, 83, of Scituate, Mass., painted his joyful risen Christ seven years ago.

Here is a smiling, triumphant, joyful Risen Christ surprising his disciples at the sea of Tiberias. Might he be suggesting, playfully, that his friends cast their nets on the right side of their boat?

Might he be inviting us to share in his laughter—the "Easter laugh"?

Might he be sending us an Easter message: that joy can be found on both sides of the cross?

Cal Samra is editor of The Joyful Noiseletter, *a monthly newsletter of the Fellowship of Merry Christians, and the author of* The Joyful Christ *(Harper Collins). Full-color prints of "The Risen Christ by the Sea" may be purchased through the Fellowship's catalog. Write to FMC, Box 895, Portage, MI 49081-0895.*

anguishing Jesus

menno wiebe

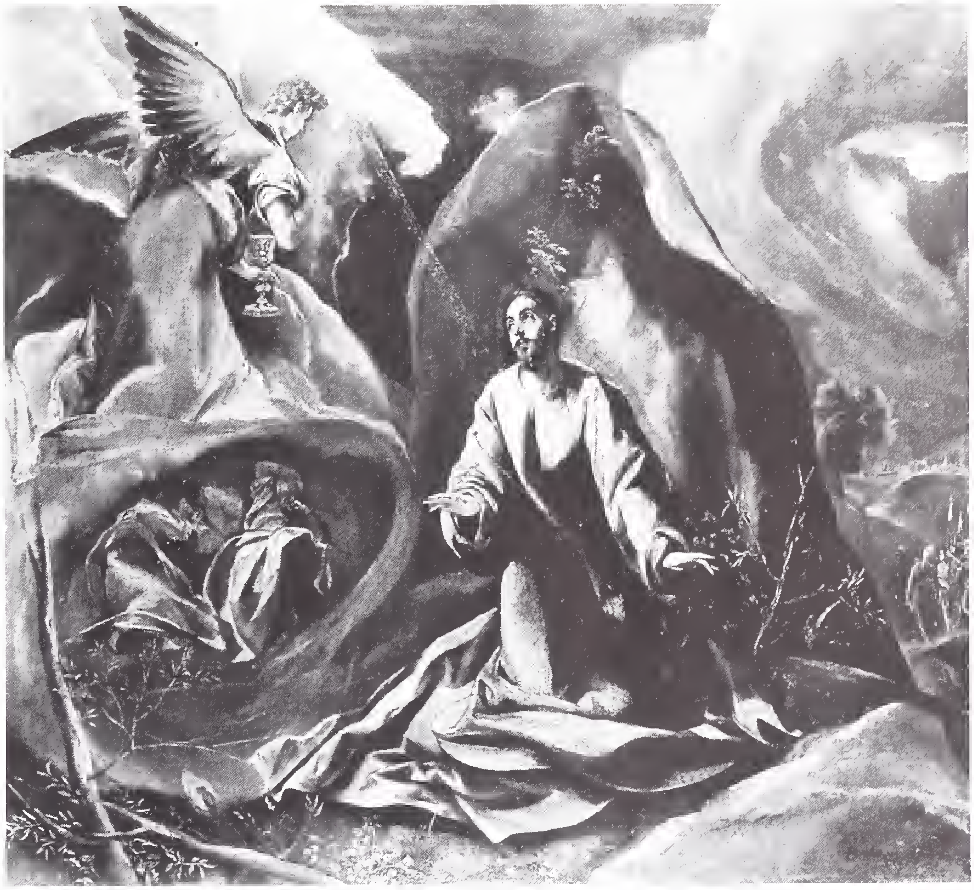
was there nobody
who would go with you
to the middle of gethsemane
where sins of humankind
were sweated out

did your faithful few
all succumb to slumber
while the crunch was on
drawing blood
in the middle of the night

did their bodies outweigh the spirit
or protocol of day and night
take precedence

disciples of today
shall the holy huddle sleep
on the margins of the issues
and permit God's big agenda
to bring about insomnia
while blood is sweated still
within the centers
of our streets

Menno Wiebe is director of Native Concerns for Mennonite Central Committee Canada.



RNS

Tell me

J.O. Schrag

Tell me what my life has meant,
sometime when I walk along
the hedgerows that line the lane.
While the wind covers
my world with dead whiteness
I will look over miles
of wandering and listen,
hold the silences until I hear
Mother's cry bringing
me into being.
In time I will find
hiding places of secrets.
As the spring returns I will
listen and hear.
Like the raindrop
into parched earth,
I will soak up stillness
and know my current there.

J.O. Schrag lives in North Newton, Kan.

A lesson about God's undeserved grace

Easter comes early for

Dorothy Nickel Friesen

Her name was Imogene. She was well-known among the clergy of the city. Dressed in an assortment of polyester layers with gaudy costume jewelry, Imogene was a sight to behold. A tall woman with ridiculously high heels, she always came into the church building by herself, leaving her husband to sit in the car—one they dared not shut off for fear they wouldn't get it started again.

"Oh, Pastor," she gushed, "it's just a miracle that you are here today. I have an emergency."

Of course, I knew her emergencies were always medical in nature—another hernia surgery, "terr'ble, poundin' headaches" or, heaven forbid, running out of insulin, and "you know what that would mean."

"Come on in, Imogene. What seems to be the problem?"

The story this time was a lost check in the mail, empty medicine bottle and a husband who would certainly die without the precious capsules that "just keep his heart going." Could I spare $30 from the church's emergency fund?

How could such an undeserving person receive such a gift?

"And you know, Preacher Dorothy, when my inheritance comes through, your church will get back all the money you've loaned to me. I don't know what I would do if I couldn't get help from you. And I'll pay you back. You'll see."

I checked my notebook and saw that it had been awhile since Imogene had paid me a call, and the Mennonites were often on her six-month rotation. This time I decided to be firm.

"Imogene, here's the situation. I'll help you out this time. It's after five o'clock on Friday (*Why do I stay in the office at that time, especially on Good Friday?*) and there's no way I can call the Social Security office to see about the delay with your check. I'll phone them on Monday. Here's $30, but this is the last 'loan' I can give you for one year. Our church simply has other people it wants to help. I'm sure you understand."

Imogene put up no fuss but eagerly reached out her red-coated fingernails to snatch this gold.

"So grateful to you, Preacher. You people are so good. Well, gotta go. Max is tired of sitting, and we have to get to filling the prescription. Sure hope my asthma don't hit again. I sorta feel like I'm breathing funny."

And with a weary gasp she was gone.

Smoke: My secretary and I watched as a tired, beat-up '62 Ford chugged out of the parking lot, spewing smoke from the tailpipe and sounding like an ancient John Deere tractor. We both speculated that the car might be on its deathbed and the next request might be for its health.

The rest of the weekend was a blur of activities, with play practices, special music rehearsals, Easter sunrise service, potluck breakfast and intergenerational activities celebrating the glorious resurrection.

It was Easter Monday when I picked up the newspaper to read "Local Woman Wins Lottery" on the front page. I glanced over the column quickly until the name "Imogene" caught my eye.

Imogene had won a $25,000 jackpot on the "Saturday Sweepstakes." She was quoted about her "terrible life but good luck" and "new home in

Imogene

Imogene was a sight to behold. A tall woman with ridiculously high heels, she always came into the church building by herself...

Kentucky.”

The righteous indignation in me could not be checked. Why did she waste her money on lottery tickets? And did I supply her with that winning dollar? I was fuming. The gall! The utter ridiculousness of it all. How could such an irresponsible person be so lucky? How could such an undeserving person receive such a gift?

I stood in my office for a minute, then rushed to the secretary’s office to show her the headline, when a familiar noise of a sputtering car in the parking lot caught our attention. Imogene was back.

Right then I decided that maybe she was settling the debt she had promised to repay. I softened.

Imogene rushed in, beaming. However, she only asked to use the phone. No demands. No thanks. No loan repayment. No nothing. Just a request to use the phone.

“Of course, Imogene. Here’s my phone. I’ll be in the front office.”

“Just a minute, Preacher,” Imogene pleaded. “I really need help. Do you know a good lawyer? You see, I won this money, but I’m not about to let my good-for-nothing husband get one red cent of it. I’m going to divorce him. Then I’m off to Kentucky. Always wanted to live there. In fact, we’re on our way. All packed up. Think I’ll build me a dream home there. I feel so lucky.”

I didn’t have the heart to explain to her the legal rights of a spouse to good fortune—earned or not—but half-heartedly showed her the yellow pages and let her find her way.

In a few minutes she was ready to leave, irritated with the lawyers, who wouldn’t help her in her mischief.

She hugged me and thanked me over and over for all the help I’d given to her.

Good preachers: Her farewell speech was a mixture of eloquence and gibberish. I can’t remember it all anymore. Something about the Lord loving the poorest of the poor. Something about those good preachers who always helped her out. Something about Max and her kids and how Easter was pretty special. And maybe I’m just imagining it, but I think she said something about how wonderful it is to get something you really don’t deserve.

And with a “Praise the Lord,” Imogene was gone.

Easter had come early for Imogene. I determined that if the church’s dollar had brought her this moment, well, maybe the resurrection is more about that kind of undeserved grace than anything else.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen is assistant dean at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Letters

A book of blessings

At this time I am in the process of compiling a book of blessings (such as for houses, travelers, newborn children, etc.) from various religious backgrounds and I would be grateful if I might ask a favor of your readers through your pages.

If you have any spiritual blessings of people or of objects with which you are familiar, I would be grateful to receive them, as well as the source from which they come. It is my hope to make this collection of blessings as inclusive as possible.

Thank you for any assistance you can give me in this work. *Philip Deemer, 7030 Lynnewood Way, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-3932*

Most informative

I have appreciated receiving *The Mennonite* and find it most informative. *Rev. George M. Jacob, Jagdeeshpur, India*

Possible solutions

I am a senior citizen, and I am handicapped with Parkinson's Disease, with a lot of time to think and meditate. I believe Mennonites should have a more active role in identifying the problems of the day, in offering possible solutions. I will suggest possible activities which would aid and abet this situation. Such activities should involve the entire church. Dialogue always helps. A brief list follows:

1. Church-wide call to prayer
2. Conferences or "Agape Peace Assemblies"
3. Media clips by Mennonite media for worldwide release of brief messages
4. Seminars by our colleges and high schools
5. Books published based on the problems and their solutions
6. Articles published in our church papers, as well as church-wide media
7. Well-qualified traveling speakers, perhaps authors, visiting designated locations, involving all denominations in that area.

I hope this will challenge your future thinking and actions. *Joe H. Garber, Edmonton, Alta.*

What I need from church

It has been many months since the special issue on "Rural Values, Urban Church" (May 11, 1993) appeared. That issue continues to haunt me because I found nothing that made me feel comfortable as an urban Mennonite. It did not match my situation.

Growing up in a small rural Mennonite community more than 40 years ago, the church was the center of our lives spiritually, intellectually and socially. Sunday morning was church and Sunday school, Sunday evening was Christian Endeavor, and Thursday night was choir practice. Each of these activities was perfectly molded for the time and place of my youth.

I am now an urban Mennonite, and the Mennonite church cannot be the center of this city. As a result, the models for church organization that worked so well in my youth do not work for me here. My family and work are my service, concert halls are full of music and there are hundreds of opportunities for intellectual stimuli. I need something different from the urban church. Even though the need for a church remains as strong as before, I have avoided the Mennonite church in Portland for many months. My mind is full by Sunday, so I don't want a sermon; my time is full of social responsibility by Sunday, so I don't want to be on any committees; our financial resources go to family, home and education, so I do not want a large financial commitment, and our lives are over-scheduled, so I do not need the stress of another scheduled event.

What I need from a church is a place for my mind to relax, to get back in touch with my spirituality and to build caring relationships. I need an environment that's more akin to a coffeehouse where I can stop by sometime on Sunday morning. I want the opportunity for good conversation, an opportunity to interact with people's lives, an opportunity to read, an opportunity for my children to play, an opportunity to touch base with my history, an opportunity to rest and an opportunity for service. It is these kinds of activities that would refresh my soul.

My hesitation in writing this letter is that it may offend or create a debate. Neither of these outcomes is desired. My effort is only to state a need. If others have similar needs, I am interested in hearing from them. *Ed C. Epp, Portland, Ore.*

Students need church support

I have recently been included in the faithful readership of *The Mennonite*. I moved away from home, to obtain my master's degree, into a community where there is no Mennonite church. For Christmas I asked my parents for a subscription so that I could keep some of my ties to my church background. My subscription started with the Jan. 25 issue, and I realized how much I miss the Mennonite community. When the Feb. 8 issue came, I wept over the article by Dorothy Nickel Friesen.

I am attending a United Methodist Church and I'm active in the campus outreach at Northeast Campus Ministry, which is also United Methodist.

Mennonite
Welcome university students into our churches

Yet somehow it is not the same. No matter how much or how little time I have to put into the "institution," it still does not have the same feeling as my church at home.

Although Friesen's article was written mainly for church leaders, it should remind college-age readers that there is the support of the church behind them. In most college classes today you cannot get the spiritual support and fellowship that the church offers. We may learn many of our values from our families, but values are also molded by school and peer-group education. So when you are in a society with different values you must choose to conform, oppress or strengthen your own values. Only with strong church support can you stand firm among college peers who may not have your Christian values. *Rebecca L. Yaeger, Monroe, La.*

New wine, new wineskins

"No joy" in dealing with sexual abuse—a "demoralizing" effect? (See

"Crisis in the Mennonite Church," Feb. 8 issue, page 9.)

I see the light shining in the gloom. It's a party of peace just beginning to happen. Sexual abuse is being heard. It was a good rug to pull up, and the skeletons are exposed and ugly.

If anything is demoralizing it's sexual abuse. [Reporting it] is worth a little persecution, a little discomfort. After the housecleaning maybe we can become our roots.

I'm glad that people who claim to stand against war are standing up to violation, violence, rage, hate against the bodies of God's created ones in our church.

Let's use our calling card—peace—and bring it home to us, regarding how we use power in relationships.

It might turn out to be about new wine and new wineskins. I'm not up for the old silence even if it means missing 10 pastors. I've had enough years of bumpy things under the carpet.

Is there a new call in the downswing? *Ann Wenger, Elkhart, Ind.*

Why we have a leadership crisis

I appreciated the article "Crisis in the Mennonite Church" by John Esau (Feb. 8 issue, page 9). Let me add some possible reasons why we are experiencing greater difficulty in filling pastoral positions in our churches.

1. We lack a full/adequate understanding of biblical leadership and the role of the pastor. Too many pastors are treated as "go-fers," as hired men and women who can easily be dismissed if the congregation (or a small segment of the congregation) chooses to do that.

2. We lack an adequate understanding of authority and how it is meant to function in the church. As individual church members/adherents we have become independent and are not submissive in the biblical sense. Submission is another term we could use enlightenment on as to its meaning.

3. Too often how we "do" church is much more influenced by the world than by the leading of the Holy Spirit. All too often we are pursuing our own agenda while calling it God's.

4. Too often we try to lead God rather than trying to follow God's Spirit.

5. Too often it seems we are either unwilling and/or unable as churches, individual members and conferences to deal adequately with conflict. We have become much more adept at "sweeping things under the rug" than we are at following the directives of Matthew 18.

6. There is a lack of accountability on the part of those who mistreat/abuse pastors and their families.

7. At times we (individually and as congregations) lack the spiritual maturity we need. Too often we are eating pablum instead of sinking our teeth into steak.

8. There are too many who do not understand the roles of the pastor's spouse and children. Too many of us do not understand how they are impacted by what the church does or doesn't do. Who do families turn to during those difficult days that come in the ministry? Who do single pastors turn to?

9. It seems to me that in numerous places people have lost respect for the office of pastor. Pastors are human and make mistakes, but if we call someone to shepherd our flock we owe it to them and their family (if they have one) to support them, to pray for them and above all to love them.

We are experiencing a leadership crisis not only in our conference but in the church in general. It is a crisis that, with God's help, we can not only survive but emerge from stronger as churches and as conferences—if we turn to the Lord and let God teach us and lead us in God's way. God desires to unfold a great and glorious future for the church. Whether or not we experience that is up to us. *Werner Janzen, Winkler, Man.*

Integrate as a federation

Thank you for your continued service to the church and its mission.

As a contribution to the ongoing discussion over MC/GC integration, I would like to encourage a broader exploration of a "federation." A federation would be the union of like-minded groups who share some common history, identity and character and hold to a basic set of common beliefs and practices of faith. In a federation each group could keep its own identity, boundaries, practices, organizations and institutions.

A federation would be much more inclusive of our worldwide Mennonite family and could include all Mennonite communities around the world. It could bring together the best in cooperative causes while having long-proven values, loyalties, cultures and programs remaining intact, changing as time warranted.

As the Mennonite church enters the 21st century we should be thinking larger than just MC/GC togetherness. Let's enter the next century holding the hands of our sisters and brothers around the world. We will need each other. *E. Joe Richards, Villa Park, Ill.*

12,000-mile info highway

In our role as directors of Mennonite Central Committee India, we recently interviewed Indian Mennonite candidates for MCC's Visitor Exchange Program.

One young man consistently responded with excellent answers to questions regarding MCC international and the worldwide church. He appeared to have been coached. When asked where he got his information, he replied that his uncle received *The Mennonite,* and he read it.

Even when it is 12,000 miles from where it is published, *The Mennonite* continues to inform. *Glen E. Miller, MCC India, Calcutta*

Ideas your church can try

The Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio, has come up with a unique way to get to know the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church better. Once a month, on Sunday evenings from February to May and August to November, the church is phoning leaders in the General Conference and the Mennonite Church. The whole congregation is able to participate in the phone calls, as the church has a two-way speaker system. The church hopes the calls will help its members become more aware of services and mission opportunities available through Mennonite boards and agencies.

Send your ideas to The Mennonite, *Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Speaking out

Is it right to help build a Buddhist worship center?

Mennonite Central Committee workers in Vietnam faced this question.

Earl Martin

The enthusiastic woman and her delegation had come from Tam Dao district, two hours northwest of Hanoi, Vietnam. They were visiting our Mennonite Central Committee office in the capital city with their special proposal in hand.

"Both the church and the pagoda in Tam Dao have been out of use for so long," said Mrs. He. "They are falling apart. Everyone is so eager to restore these houses of worship. Can MCC help us?

"We villagers will do the work," she continued. "But we need money to buy bricks, wood pillars and other materials ... about $3,000."

The proposal took us by surprise. Here was a proposal for MCC to help restore not only a church building but also a Buddhist pagoda. How should we respond?

Some days after Mrs. He's visit to the MCC office, we bounced for two hours over the rough roads to visit the village and its church and pagoda. Local folks greeted us with keen enthusiasm. First, they took us to the 400-year-old pagoda.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*. Write to us and let readers know your opinion on this topic. Write to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

A kind-faced Buddhist nun, Phuc Te U, greeted us warmly. At age 72, this woman had seen a lot. Even now she lived a Spartan life.

She and local residents pointed out the termite- and weather-eaten pillars of the pagoda and the leaky roof that needed repair.

We sat on the pagoda's cool floor and sipped soft drinks on that sweltering day. The nun and Mrs. He told how the pagoda in the last few years had become not only a place of religious worship, but also a center for women, including the respected elderly ones, to gather to discuss issues of family and village life. The pagoda had become a center for education and practical problem solving in the community, an asset to any village development program.

But we wondered how the Buddhist folks felt about the nearby Christian church. "Oh, we all work together. We will volunteer labor to build the church and the Christians will volunteer to help build the pagoda," one woman said. "That's always been the spirit here."

Next we traveled down the dirt road between the rice paddies to visit the Christian church. People came out in droves to meet us. We were soon swamped by smiling adults and curious children who showed us their church building, constructed in 1941.

Mr. Cau, a lay church leader, explained that up to 150 believers gathered daily for Scripture reading and prayers in the church. On Sundays double that number assembled.

He said that in addition to needing building material to refurbish the church, they hoped to purchase a public address system to accommodate such large attendance. Could MCC please help?

What to do? We left the village that night to head back home to Hanoi. There seemed little doubt to us that helping refurbish both the church and the pagoda would be a sign of hope and encouragement to the people. We pondered the options:

1. We could turn down the proposal entirely. We could say that traditionally MCC has not helped to construct church buildings.

But here in Tam Dao, when we have said we want to work with villagers in all facets of their lives, should we now reject their appeal for help in their religious life? And if we did help, should we discriminate between Christians and Buddhists?

2. We could help rebuild the church but not the pagoda. We could explain that as a Christian organization MCC would support only the church. The Buddhists should seek funds elsewhere.

But would that response foster interreligious competition and tension in a setting where there now seems to be much harmony?

3. We could marvel at the mysterious ways of God's Spirit and support the proposal. As Mennonite church workers, we seek to be followers of Christ in life. In Vietnam and elsewhere, we have delighted in opportunities to listen and share with folk stories of "the hope that lies within us."

The history of Christianity in Vietnam has often been marked by conquest, colonialism and division. Is it possible that this small symbol of openness and support—to Christians and Buddhists alike—would communicate the true spirit of Christian love in a surprising and unexpected way?

> Is it possible that this small symbol of openness and support—to Christians and Buddhists alike—would communicate the true spirit of Christian love in a surprising and unexpected way?

We went ahead and approved the $3,000 for both a church and a pagoda. We did so knowing that we—and the church—will need to continue to wrestle with tough issues such as these as we work in our world.

Earl Martin, Ephrata, Pa., currently works in communications for MCC. A year ago he and Pat, his wife, were in Hanoi, Vietnam, coordinating the MCC program in Hanoi for seven months. They are members of Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa. Reprinted with permission from Gospel Herald

Learning to pray

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries in Elkhart, Ind.

The problem with confession

4 ways to reclaim prayers of confession

Marlene Kropf

"We don't do confession," the deacon told me. We were in the midst of planning a Sunday worship service. I was a guest in the community and had been asked to lead worship the following week. When I suggested that we include a prayer of confession in the service, the deacon objected. The pastor agreed that the congregation would find it awkward to participate in a prayer of confession.

"Could we sing a hymn of confession instead?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," they agreed. No one would object to singing a confession.

I puzzled over that conversation for weeks. Although many Christian churches regularly include a congregational prayer of confession in weekly worship, such a practice is not as well established among Mennonites. Some of us are afraid of congregational prayers—afraid that people might speak words insincerely. Ironically, though, we seem to be less fastidious about meaning every word we use when we sing.

In some churches, the pastoral prayer includes an element of confession. In a priestly role, the pastor brings the people's needs and concerns to God and also acknowledges their failures.

Revival meetings in years past offered people an opportunity to confess their sins. In some communities, a preparatory service prior to communion also provided such an opportunity for self-examination and confession. Since both of these traditions are in decline, I wonder if the practice of confessing sin is also disappearing among us.

A biblical pattern for worship found in Isaiah's vision (Isaiah 6:1-8) includes three distinct elements: (1) a song of praise upon seeing the glory and majesty of God, (2) a cry for cleansing—which is both personal and communal, (3) a response of commitment and obedience to the will of God.

God's seraph: In the midst of a vision of God's holiness, Isaiah is startled by the contrast of his own sin as well as the sin of his community. Almost before the words of confession are spoken, God's seraph comes near and offers cleansing and forgiveness. The way then becomes clear for Isaiah to hear God's voice and respond in loving obedience.

If such a pattern is biblical, what might we be missing if we fail to practice confession? The first thing we miss is the experience of receiving grace. When we face our failures honestly and confess our need for cleansing, God promises to shower us with mercy and grace. We also miss out on healing. Only what is confessed and brought to light can be transformed.

The community of faith also misses an opportunity for solidarity and bonding. Nothing drives people apart more quickly than pretending to be perfect. Because we all know that we are imperfect, we build a solid foundation of trust by admitting our sins and opening ourselves to admonition and encouragement.

How may we reclaim prayers of confession?

1 A first step is to encourage people to offer simple prayers of confession daily. Psalm 51:1,2,10 or the Lord's Prayer could be used by families or individuals.

2 People participating in spiritual friendships or small groups can practice the discipline of offering regular prayers of confession.

3 Pastors and worship leaders may include prayers of confession in the Sunday worship. Hymns such as "From the depths of sin" (*Hymnal: a Worship Book* #136) or "Open, Lord, my inward ear" (#140) may be sung. Spoken prayers such as Menno Simons' prayer (#700) or a prayer adapted from Psalm 103:10-12 (#694) may be used.

4 Observing the season of Lent is another way to highlight the importance of confession. In preparation for entering Holy Week and the Easter season, we prayerfully examine our lives, ask for cleansing and receive the gift of new life.

If we encourage people to confess their sins to God, we also need to offer words of assurance and forgiveness. The biblical pattern of confession always includes God's lavish gift of grace. Although confession may certainly include feelings of contrition and regret, it is not meant to be a "downer." Instead it is an act of courage and trust—a step toward healing and wholeness.

> When we face our failures honestly and confess our need for cleansing, God promises to shower us with mercy and grace.

People may also need guidance to understand the corporate nature of such prayers. In North America we are more accustomed to thinking of ourselves as individuals than as members of a community. When we pray together in worship, the sins we confess are the sins of the entire body of believers, not just the sins of individuals.

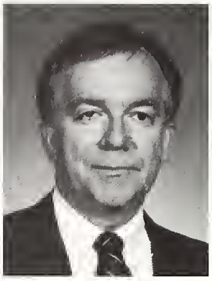
The next time I show up at the congregation mentioned earlier, I hope the deacon and pastor will no longer be afraid of confession. Instead I hope they will be celebrating the grace of forgiveness and dancing with joy.

Fiscal health

How to use retirement funds for charity

Help your heirs and limit your taxable income.

J.B. Miller



J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

When Mennonites have thought of leaving a legacy to their church or a charitable organization, they often consider giving from their assets at the time of their death. This usually means leaving a piece of real estate to the charity. Real estate is the obvious choice because many Mennonites own real estate, often in the form of agricultural holdings. But recently stocks and other securities have also been considered. All these assets represent appropriate gifts to charities.

This is not an option for the people who do not own real estate or securities. Many of these people, however, have accumulated assets through an individual retirement account (IRA) or other retirement planning programs. As more and more of our members become employees in corporate settings rather than self-employed farmers, significant resources are being accumulated in IRAs, stock option plans and other retirement plans.

People occasionally wonder about the giving options available to them during life. Can you, for example, use an IRA or other tax-deferred account to fund a gift annuity or other charitable instrument without paying taxes? Usually the answer is no. Because retirement plans generally are nonassignable, to take money from an IRA and establish a gift annuity would result in a tax liability and possibly a penalty at the time of the withdrawal. However, several avenues are available that will result in an IRA being turned into a significant charitable gift with little actual cost to the owner.

An ideal time to give retirement funds to charity is at death. The estate of the owner of a large IRA may face significant tax liability because the IRA will be subject to several independent taxes. Depending on the size of the estate, up to 85 percent of the IRA or other retirement plan may be due in taxes. In addition to federal estate tax, IRAs are subject to income tax as well as a 15 percent excise tax on any amount over $750,000. If you have a taxable estate and have not done proper estate planning, your heirs may receive only 15 to 25 percent of your retirement account value. Here is your opportunity to be generous. The account may be given to a charity in one of the following ways:

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

If you have a taxable estate and have not done proper estate planning, your heirs may receive only 15 to 25 percent of your retirement account value. Here is your opportunity to be generous.

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

- **Naming a charity as beneficiary of your IRA**: The easiest way to give your IRA to a charity at your death or at the death of your spouse is to name the charity as either first or second beneficiary of the balance remaining at the time of death. This designation will result in a tax deduction to the estate for the amount of the gift.
- **Establish a charitable remainder trust at death**: Another way of giving your tax-deferred retirement funds to charity is to name a charitable remainder trust as the beneficiary of the account balance. This trust could be established in a way that provides income for a spouse, children or other beneficiaries for a number of years, after which the remaining funds are distributed to charities.

The charitable trust is tax-exempt, which means it will not need to pay any income tax on the value of the assets placed in the trust. This transfer also entitles the estate to a partial charitable deduction. Income beneficiaries are taxed on the amount they actually receive as income from the trust.

This concept was approved by the Internal Revenue Service in two private letter rulings in 1992 and has several favorable results. The owner does not relinquish any control of the IRA during her or his lifetime. A beneficiary may have income for a number of years, and a charity eventually receives a substantial gift. Instead of 15 to 25 percent of the IRA going to an heir and the balance to the IRS, the total account may be used to support the charitable interests of the donor. Prior to the distribution of the trust assets, a child or other heir can receive income that may be higher than the amount he or she might have received had she been named as the outright beneficiary of the account. While this may all sound complicated, a well-versed attorney in estate planning will be familiar with the concept and can assist in the establishment of the necessary charitable trusts.

Many of us are now accumulating funds for retirement. It is important that we do proper planning so that we do not pay unnecessary taxes and so that charities will benefit.

In our next issue Edgar Rempel of the Mennonite Foundation in Canada will offer advice on using retirement funds in Canada for charity.

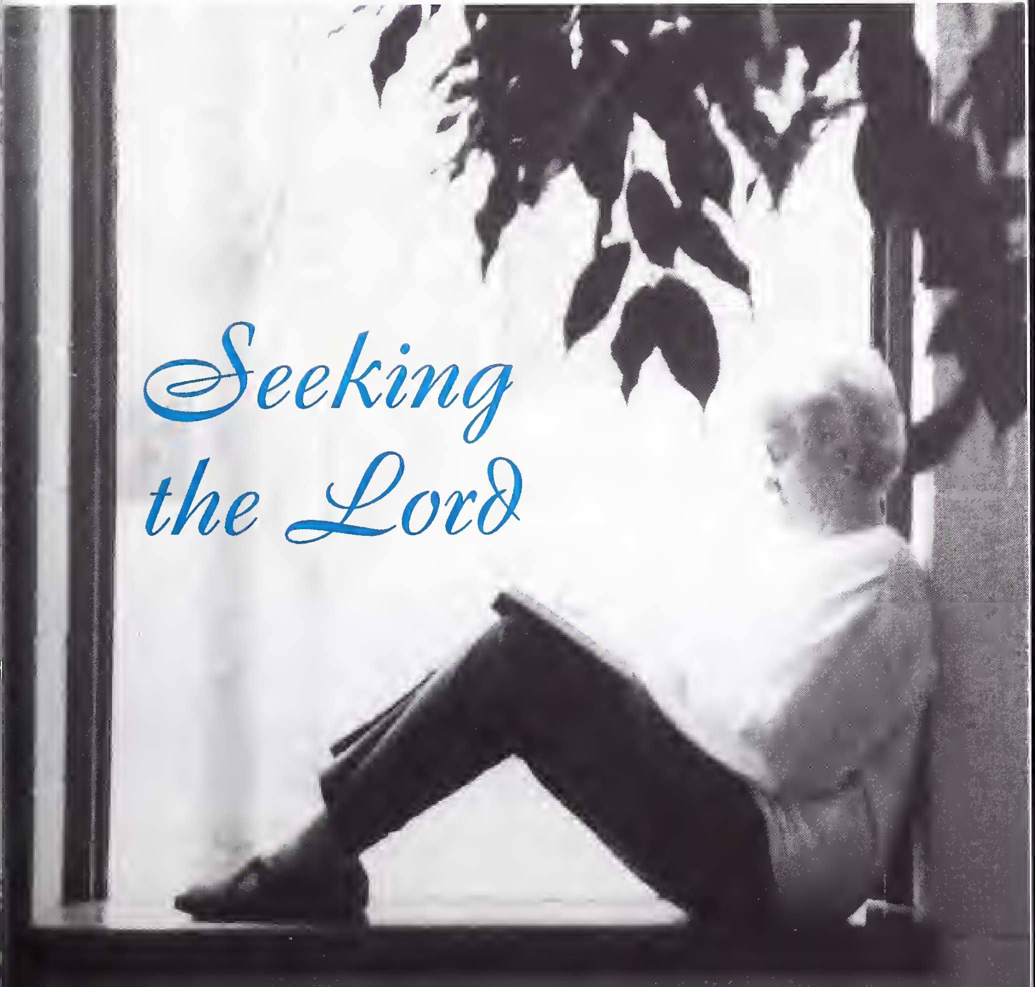
If you have topics you would like J.B. Miller to address, write to him c/o The Mennonite, *Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

WM

THE Mennonite

MARCH 22, 1994

WINDOW TO MISSION



Seeking the Lord

As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. *Ps. 42:1*

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Cover: Virgil Schmidt is director of grounds at Bethel College, N. Newton, KS. He and his wife, Doris, have three married children and five grandchildren. They are members of Faith Mennonite Church.

Mission Statement Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: 1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; 2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; 3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; 4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

NURTURING OUR INNER LIFE

by Evelyn Bertsche

Deep within each of us is implanted a longing for God. Until we become aware of the source of that longing, we experience a vague sense of need. Along the way we try many substitutes for the love and unity we seek. But until we find our interior connection with our Creator we remain unfulfilled and incomplete.

Why do we as women not nurture ourselves and give time and attention to the needs of our own souls?

- We have been taught to take care of the needs of others before we take care of our own needs. We may allow the needs of others to shape our thoughts and actions. In the process, we have "turned off" our own inner voices and have listened and given authority to other voices.
- In addition, our society tells us that fulfillment and happiness is exterior to ourselves. If we listen to these voices, it is difficult to hear our own inner voice and the voice of love speaking in the solitude and silence within us.
- If we have been wounded in our self-perception, it is difficult to be in touch with our emotions and our deepest needs and desires.

Nurturing others *is* an important part of what we are called to do. Do we need permission to do that other important work to which we are called—the nurture of our own souls and the inner sense of unity with God that is so central to our completeness?

Permission, for some, has come from living models, from reading or through personal experiences that have awakened them to an awareness that they need to nurture their own growth in God's love. Some have been awakened by illness or other calamity.

Ten years ago a six-month struggle with lupus was my own awakening experience. I reevaluated my priorities, faced my fear of death and encountered God. This experience awoke in me a longing to *know* the God whom I had encountered.

Because each of us is different, there is no uniform way to nurture greater awareness of God's love and presence. However, there are some basic attitudes and disciplines that are helpful in preparing us to encounter God and experience God's presence in our lives.

To discern which disciplines are the most helpful, we may need some help in uncovering the fears and defenses that are blocking our awareness. Meeting with a pastor, counselor or mentor may help to identify hindrances to growth.

Disciplines in themselves do not produce the gift of relationship and unity with God, but they do make us receptive. Disciplines are methods

Evelyn Bertsche is an associate pastor at the Mennonite Church of Normal, Illinois. She and her husband, John, an internist, have two grown children and five grandchildren.

that nurture attitudes of the heart and mind. Attitudes: of **honesty**—to face the fears and darkness that hides or masquerades within; **openness**—to change and openness to the unknown; **receptivity**—to God's voice and transforming work in our lives; **willingness**—to let go of old ideas, images and control of our ways of doing things; and **humility**—to see ourselves as we really are. These attitudes are essential for God's Spirit to work with and in us.

Important to the cultivation of these attitudes are the disciplines of **solitude, stillness** and **prayer.**

Solitude is a place alone where I can get in touch with myself and God. It is a place of discovery. Jesus set the example as he often went to the hills for solitude apart from the crowds and his disciples.

Stillness is a combination of outer silence and inner quiet. Stillness is both scary and holy, because it is where we meet ourselves and God. It is scary because in the stillness we first meet our dark and wounded side. No wonder we surround ourselves with so much noise. In the quiet, our painful memories, old hurts and regrets come to consciousness. If we are willing, they can be healed. Someone has said that when we enter into silence we first discover our garbage, then our gold. In the same silence where we meet ourselves, we also meet God.

Prayer is more than words or practices or exercises, though these can help us enter into prayer. Prayer is communion with God. Prayer is transformational. It has to do with all of life. As we become more prayerful we find that gradually we become more alive, reverent, free, more in tune with the Holy. We become more aware of others and their needs. We *become* our prayer.

Regardless of the form of prayer, there are certain practical aspects in cultivating our inner life of prayer. We need **time**, prime time when we are not tired, for prayer. Ideally it should be a time when we are least distracted with other concerns.

A **place** that is quiet and where we can be alone is preferable. There may be a variety of places: a walk in the woods or along a country road or watching a sunset.

If we are serious about prayer, there needs to be **regularity** in our time of prayer. When we are faithful to a regular time for prayer, the whole day begins to reflect the prayerful moments.

Studying the Scriptures, devotional readings, writings of spiritual masters or the use of a journal may help to deepen our awareness and understanding. A course or a retreat on prayer or meditation often provides more concentrated learnings.

Prayer in solitude and silence is never isolated from **community**. We need accountability to test and discern the work of the Holy Spirit in our life. This is why it is so important to be a member of a small sharing group or to have a spiritual friend with whom you can test your experiences. Our times of personal prayer enrich our times of corporate worship so that our life in community is strengthened.

If we are seeking, we may be taught through reading, at a retreat, by a friend or small group, in community worship or in our own experience. I am convinced that God will honor our desire if we are truly searching to nurture growth in our inner life.

Resources for you

Broyles, Anne. *Journaling: A Spirit Journey.* Nashville, Tenn.: The Upper Room, 1988. Provides an accessible, much needed introduction to this spiritual discipline.

Foster, Richard. *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*. New York: Harper, Collins, New York, 1992. A warm, compelling and sensitive primer on prayer.

Kropf, Marlene. "How to Be More Accountable to Each Other," *Carrying God's Light, Strength for the Journey*. A joint publication of WM and WMSC. Scottdale, Pa., 1993, pp. 61-63. An invitation to spiritual friendship. Available through Women in Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114 (phone 316-283-5100).

Lehman, Sandra Drescher. *Waters of Reflection: Meditations for Everyday*. Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books, 1993. Centers on the themes of water and God as found in the characteristics of water.

Nouwen, Henri. *Out of Solitude.* Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1974. Three meditations on the Christian life: our life in solitude, becoming the fellowship of the broken, made possible by our expectation of Christ's return.

* * *

All books mentioned can be ordered from Faith & Life Bookstore, 724 N. Main, Newton, KS 67114 (phone toll free: 800-743-2484).

Meet our 1993-94 scholarship recipients

Mary Dyck, in her 50s with six grown children, returned to AMBS this year from Winnipeg as a second-year M.Div. student. Prior to study at AMBS, Mary served a number of years as a hospital chaplain for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba and as a deacon in her home church. Upon completion of her program, she hopes to work in congregational pastoral ministry. She writes, "I appreciate this financial aid very much. I also appreciate the support I feel as a woman entering theological studies and continued ministry."

Jeni Hiett Umble is a first-year M.Div. student, having come from Irvine, Calif., where she taught English as a second language. Her home church is Hope Mennonite of Ft. Worth, Tex., which she helped plant some years ago. She also taught English in China with China Educational Exchange from 1987 to '89. Her master's thesis in history from Southern Methodist University was *Women in the Martyrs Mirror*. Her husband, Art, is currently a doctoral student at nearby Notre Dame and they share the care of their young son, Rusty. They hope to work in an overseas service assignment upon completion of their studies.

Rachel Clemens is a second-year M.Div. student, currently attending Kern Road Mennonite in South Bend, but originally a member of Mennonite Church of Normal, Ill. Prior to study here she worked as a family therapist, specializing in sexual abuse work with adults and work with offenders and their spouses. She is open to new opportunities in ministry upon completion of her degree.

On the beach at Grand Haven

by Julie Lafollette

Not Bethlehem
but Grand Haven
and I, not a virgin,
but a servant.

...not an angel
but a cloud
sat with me
on that beach of my life

dropped a coal,
shiny, deep blackness
into my hand
and drew from my clay
a miracle

you are holy
it said, as pink billows
charged up against blue sky

the holy deep
rests deep within you
and you can bear it

-oh hear-
oh hear great glad tidings
ring, through heaven's gate
...before the birth,
...before the knowing,
you shall have a visitor
the breath of God,
...a new thing shall be born

-in you-
deep...
the *holy*
is in you
and your whole presence
yearns and sighs with its beauty

pink billows
charging out of sunset stanchions
foreverness...
...boundless...holy
holy spirit
in me

Julie Lafollette is a technical writer by day. She and her sons live in Elkhart, Ind., where Julie is a member of Prairie Street Mennonite Church.

Journey thoughts

by Bek Linsenmeyer

Several years ago when a friend announced he was going on a four-day retreat, I was silently angry at him for leaving his pregnant wife with three children. I didn't begin to understand the legitimacy of taking care of the "God need" in our lives. I don't think I'm alone in that. In preparing this issue I was told that if it were for a Catholic audience, no one would raise an eyebrow. How much more, then, do Mennonite women need permission: to take the time to be, to be aware of God's presence, to be reflective.

In the Mary-Martha story of Luke 10:38-42, we realize that by allowing Mary to sit at his feet Jesus gave Mary permission to be a student—an innovation, as rabbis didn't have women students. But after the reproved Martha slunk back to the kitchen, what might *she* have permission to be? What new possibilities opened up for Martha that day? After she had recovered from Jesus' "Martha, Martha,...there is need of only one thing," could she find liberation in those words? Could she decide that in the future the fare could be simpler, the preparation time reduced? Could she recognize that Mary's level of preparation ("Mary has left me," indicating that Mary had helped) was sufficient? Could Martha's unburdened self then have the opportunity to listen?

If the theme of this issue is "seeking the Lord," then the subtitle is "permission." Why is permission so important? Because most of us have years of "shoulds" and "oughts" to overcome and it is a significant task to balance our scales.

We raise objections: I'm too busy; What would people think? But beyond our objections is there an unspoken fear? What would I do alone with God?

In my deepest time of need—when I wondered if chemotherapy would work for me, when I wondered where God was in all my confusion and weakness—I experienced God's very real encouragement. I learned that truly "there is now no condemnation" (Romans 8:1). There *is* understanding. There *is* compassion for my weakness. I wonder if God is not even more protecting in our weakness.

As you prepare for Easter, do not be afraid to be with God. There is nothing in that presence but love.

Bek Linsenmeyer edits *Window to Mission* at the Newton office. She and her family live next to the Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan., where her husband, Dean, is pastor.

COMMISSION ON HOME MINISTRIES

LOOKING IN, LOOKING OUT

by Jane Roeschley

I felt trapped! The undeniable sense that God was tapping my shoulder to be LIFE* coordinator contrasted starkly with my own fears of inadequacy. Something in that trap forced me to search for God in deeper ways.

Being LIFE coordinator triggered all of my compulsions to do a good job. It was easy to set myself up on the treadmill of doing, doing, doing.

In contrast to that, I definitely sensed God wooing me to just be. Because the LIFE process is about the growing of "new life" in a congregation, I was drawn to discovering more about making space for new life with God in me. I wanted to learn more about how to have integrity in my doing *for* God by nurturing my being *with* God.

At about this time the opportunity came for me to develop an intentional, spiritual friendship with another woman. My friend opened her home to me with its comfy chair and tissue box, and her heart with its capacity to receive my joys and struggles as precious gifts.

There are several important gifts this spiritual friendship has given me. My friend embodied God's unconditional love as month after month I unloaded my experiences of pain, delight, anger, ecstasy, fear or jealousy. My friend also quickly affirmed any evidence of growth and celebratively mentioned it. And my friend's willingness to share parts of her own journey gifted me with wisdom and support from one who understood.

As my awareness of God's abiding care for me grew through nurturing my being with God, I did not find any miraculous answers to my struggles about being and doing. Learning to find balance with being and doing will be a lifelong process. What is different is that I am more eager to trust the process of God at work than to need to see results of my own. Now I am more willing to see mistakes as stepping stones to learning. What used to feel like a trap is the process for my being transformed.

Jane Roeschly, husband Mark and their three children farm outside of Graymont, IL. Jane also serves on the Cenbtral District Ministerial Committee. She is currently taking her first course at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

***The LIFE (Living in Faithful Evangelism) program has been underway since 1990. WM's support of CHM helps fund this unique process.**

COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

PRISMS

PROCLAIM · ENABLE · NURTURE

by Karen Ediger

As a teenager I was part of a weekly small group Bible study. It was a chance to develop friendships with other teens who wanted to learn more about God and to share our thoughts about what we were studying. Unfortunately, it was frequently an experience in pooled ignorance. Since then, I've looked for more effective ways to study the Bible.

We learn more about a Scripture passage if we spend time with the Scripture by itself before we go to other sources. We learn more when we have questions we want answered or when we can relate the story to personal experiences. I hope some of the following ideas will be helpful in your Bible study. You may want to follow the whole process for an in-depth study or pick one or two ideas to enhance your study. None of these ideas requires special knowledge, just a willingness to listen for God's message to us and to be transformed.

1. **Listen.** Have an attitude of openness and listening. Begin with silent prayer and meditation. Ask God to speak to you through the Word and through others who may be studying with you. Be ready to hear God's word to you. Be open to the possibility of the unexpected.

2. **Read the text.** Use a good translation in the language you know best, whether it's English, German, Spanish or another language. Don't start with a paraphrase like *The Living Bible*. If you are in a study group, have someone read the passage. Try to listen to the text as if you are hearing or reading this for the first time. Reading it in a different way (whispering or shouting is appropriate) will help it seem new.

—Start a list of everything you notice about the text. Write down your questions. List words you don't understand. Notice the context.

—Write a one-sentence summary of the passage.

3. **Read the text and amplify.** Read the text again, this time using two additional translations and a paraphrase.

—Note things you would notice about any story: the main characters; different viewpoints; who were the first readers (or hearers)? When did the event occur?

—Read the text from the viewpoint of each character. Write down how you felt in the role of each character.

—Wonder about the story. Relate the passage to your own experience. How does it relate to your life? How would you have felt as a character in the story?

—Note any references to other Scriptures.

—Add to your list until you have *20* insights or questions about the text.

COE provides support and resources that nurture spiritual growth. WM funds support COE in this work.

The first few will be easy, the last few may come to you very slowly. Some will be trivial. But sometimes in the struggle to gain the last few insights, we grapple with the text more deeply than a first, second or even third reading allows. In grappling with the text this way, some of our best insights come—insights we would have missed otherwise.

—Write another brief summary of the passage.

4. **Research**. After you have struggled with the text and the questions it raised, satisfy your curiosity.

—Look up words and phrases in a concordance to see how they are used elsewhere in the Bible. Look them up in a Bible dictionary or theological word book to learn more about their significance.

—Locate geographical locations on a map in the back of your Bible or in a Bible atlas. Professional magazines can also give you additional information.

—Consider the references to other Scripture passages: connections between the passage studied and other references mentioned.

—Read about the passage in a commentary or two. Commentaries represent one or several viewpoints, but not necessarily the only correct viewpoints. Usually they also include information about the geographical and historical background of the passage and any traditions connected to the passage. (If you don't have these resources yourself, check the church library, the local library, Christian bookstore or see your pastor.)

5. **Integrate**. Walter Wink advises that in order to fully experience the text, we need to engage our creativity in exercises that integrate the passage into our lives. Experiment with his suggestions:

—Write a psalm, poem or parable. Write about the passage or an experience of yours that relates to the passage.

—Paint a picture. Paint an objective picture of the situation in the passage or a subjective personal reaction to the passage.

—Act out the passage. Using mime or role-play, reenact the passage. If you are doing this by yourself, move to a different position for each character.

—Sculpt an object. Use clay or play dough to create a figure which represents some aspect of the passage, or your reaction to it. Close your eyes and let your hands work instinctively.

—Write a summary paragraph of the text. Rewrite the passage in your own words using your own experiences. (For more information about these exercises and others, read Walter Wink's *Transforming Bible Study,* [Abingdon Press], 1980, pp. 109-27. Walter Wink is a professor of biblical interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York.)

End your Bible study with prayer. Does this passage speak to any particular need in your life? What insights were new or unexpected? Thank God for being present in your study and for any insights. Finally, live with the text in the back of your mind for the next few days. Let it become a part of you and influence your thoughts and actions. Allow yourself to be transformed.

Karen Unruh Ediger is a secretary for the Commission on Education and works primarily for the Jubilee Project Office and Venture Clubs. She and her husband, Glen, have a five-year-old son, Brandan. They attend Bethel College Mennonite Church. Karen is also a student at Great Plains Seminary in North Newton, Kan.

COMMISSION ON OVERSEAS MISSION

WINDOW ON THE WORLD

by Tobia Vandenberg Veith

Thoughts from Hong Kong to my sister in Canada.

In the midst of moving yet another time, I think of you, Susan, for we have shared well over 20 moves. (Tobia and Susan's parents are Han and Martha Vandenberg, recently retired from 38 years in Taiwan with COM.) Now you are starting a new home with Rod.

When George, baby Matthew and I spent four months "on the road" coming to Asia. I began to understand, in a small way, the homeless feeling of refugees. In whatever circumstance, we all need to find our most basic sense of home, security and dwelling place in God. *Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. Psalm 90:1,2 (NRSV).* God is there for me in the excitement of Chinese Christian sisters and brothers who shared in the anticipation of the birth of our second child, Michael. God is there in the quiet moments of Scripture reading, gently changing my loneliness to a trusting solitude. God is there as I whisper prayers even in the creative chaos of child care. God is there in my children's shining eyes and my husband's care. God is there embracing me as I welcome people into my home. These ways of experiencing God's presence—Christian community, the Scriptures, prayer, family and hospitality—are largely "portable" and nurture a sense of home wherever I am.

In this pilgrim lifestyle I still long for a home—a special place. Mom and Dad kept the Dutch plates and pewter, the paintings and rocking chair, which say "home" when we come into their house. A comfortable setting, a welcoming embrace and a listening ear will make our homes places which reflect God's presence and peace. We have seen Mom and Dad opening their home in this way, a gentle way of being in mission. Hong Kong is a city of restless people, always on the go and out on the streets. I pray that the hospitality I extend to others in the Spirit of Christ provides a sense of home but also whets appetites for an eternal homecoming where there will be no more loneliness or good-byes.

Susan, I pray the same for you and Rod as you set up your home.

Tobia Veith, and her husband, George, are evangelism workers and church planters in Hong Kong. Their home church is Cornerstone Church-Mennonite in Saskatoon, Sask.

WM supports COM's new outreach ministries in Hong Kong.

Viewpoints

by Jeanne Rempel

When was the last time you heard God speaking these words to you: *My child I love you. I created you as a woman and I delight in you. I don't love you for what you do, I delight in you, in who you really are. I want you to delight in me, too. I want you to sit quietly and delight in me. I do not want your words, I want your joy in the same way that I joy in you. I want to hear you laugh, and I want you to listen, to listen so that I can speak to you. Listen so that I can tell you how precious you are to me. Please let us enjoy each other.*

An unfamiliar message? One that we as Mennonite women may not know what to do with. We know how to assemble health kits and we know how to prepare church dinners, but do we know how to sit and listen to God? There's nothing tangible to show for it, and what would people think if it were known that we just sat and thought about God?

It's a funny thing about people who sit and listen to God: they can turn out to be those wise people in the congregation who seem to radiate life and joy even though we may not quite understand what they have to be joyful about.

One of the surest ways to move women to a place where they take time to listen to God is when they have no other choices, like finding themselves flat on their backs or backed up against a wall. That's how I really started to listen to God.

But I'd like to think that misfortune is not a requirement before busy, industrious North American women stop and find out how to listen to God. What do you think? Can you listen to God for an hour or even a day and hear what God has to say to you? I hope so. It takes commitment and starting small. It takes quieting those pangs of guilt and resisting the urge to jump up and do what visibly needs doing. It may take going somewhere without responsibility and with enough privacy for you to be safe and relaxed. But it is worth it. My prayers are with you all as you quiet your hearts, minds and bodies to listen to the God who loves you so and longs for your companionship.

Jeanne Rempel, WM president, is attempting to listen to God in the middle of a kitchen and bath remodeling, while cooking in a shop-turned-kitchen. Husband, three children, dog, three cats and three fish are all surviving remarkably well while the "house remodeling story collection" grows by leaps and bounds.

ROUNDTABLE

by Susan Jantzen

Susan Jantzen is coordinator of WM and lives in Newton with her husband, Jim, and sons, Peter and Robert.

From the **Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission** (AIMM) newsletter:

Mennonite mission workers celebrated 25 years of church work in Botswana, during which time there have been 30 AIMMers and 205 MCC workers. Indigenous church leaders said that "the Mennonites were the first group of whites that they encountered that they were able to work with. The Mennonites asked them where they could help." They also "addressed the theme of pacifism, a concept that had been foreign to Africa Independent churches before meeting Mennonites." **Thank you, women, for supporting mission workers to Africa and the AIMM auxiliary.**

In December our first **Abraham and Sarah caravan** from the General Conference Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) traveled to a new Mennonite congregation in Pismo Beach, Calif. The purpose is to develop and nurture new churches. Women and men from established Mennonite congregations led workshops on quilting, four-part singing, living more with less and voluntary service. One WM group I spoke with in October had two members going on this caravan and looking forward to this new experience. The second caravan will go to Miami, March 3-10. For more information contact Lester and Winifred Ewy, 3202 Royer West Drive, Newton, KS. 67114, phone 316-283-2965.

Would your group consider linking up supportively to a newer Mennonite church? Letters could be exchanged, work projects scheduled or financial support shared. Lois Barrett of CHM has ideas for any interested womens group. Call Lois at 316-283-5100, or talk to me (Susan Jantzen) at the same number.

Congregational Visitation Tour: Phyllis and Myron Schultz completed their third visitation tour, this time to Central District. Phyllis met with many womens groups as well as congregations. We look forward to hearing reports and concerns from these Central District churches when we gather in Newton for the March Council of Commissions. Phyllis is WM's Northern District president.

Hopi Mission School Needs: 1. Caldecott and Newberry Award books. The teachers use a lot of literature in their classes. These are quality books with high educational merit. 2. Games for Kindergarten through sixth grade. The school does not have a gymnasium, so in bad weather these would be used when students must spend recesses in their classrooms. If you have questions about any of these needs, please feel free to call Hopi Mission School at 602-734-2253 or 602-734-2453.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Anabaptist women hold the Scripture to be foundational for faith and action. Below are responses to questions about General Conference Bible-related work.

Does General Conference have Bible distribution projects?

- COM provides $1,000 each year through China Education Exchange for Bible publishing and distribution in China.
- Many mission workers purchase Bibles in bulk to sell at cost. Jean and Gary Isaac, for example, sell Bibles at cost to Africa Independent Church leaders attending Bible conferences. The cost of Bible distribution is included in salaries and transportation expenses. In general, it is not wise to simply give Bibles away, although there are some exceptions when Bibles are given.

How can women respond who are looking for Bible distribution projects?

Designate funds for "Bibles for China."

Designate funds for specific mission workers (listed below).

Who among our General Conference workers are involved in Bible translation?

- Anne Garber, Gerald and Bev Neufeld, and Phil and Carol Bergen are all working in Burkina Faso.
- Louise Fisher, Aline Killsontop, and Gladys Old Mouse, three members of our Mennonite churches in Lame Deer and Busby, Mont., are helping Wycliffe workers translate the Bible into Cheyenne. The Old Testament is currently being translated, and the New Testament (which missionary Rodolphe Petter completed translating in 1935) is being reworked.

What about translation of Bible study materials?

COM helps in the translation of Bible study materials in Latin America*, Asia and Africa.

The goal is to enable local people to develop Bible study materials in their own language appropriate to their context. Workers in this activity are: Robert Suderman, Colombia; Don Rempel Boschman, Erica Thiessen, Jonathan Larson, and Eugene Thieszen, all in Botswana; Gary and Jean Isaac, Transkei, South Africa.

*CLARA: Latin American Anabaptist Resource Center in Colombia, AEM: Mennonite Evangelical Association in Brazil and SEMILLA: Latin American Anabaptist Seminary in Central America through the Council of International Ministries.

Our fiscal year ended January 31, 1994. Here are the General Conference Women in Mission receipts for 1993:

Your Giving	Amount	Percentage
February 1, 1992—January 1, 1993	$191,927.88	103.7%
February 1, 1993—January 1, 1994	$202,857.85	109.65%

Our thanks to each of you contributing women! Thanks to our God that we have resources to share and the work of the church to support. Let us pray that each of us gives as the Spirit leads.

WINDOW SHOPPING

Kits for kids at homeless shelters—One good way to respond to need in your community could be sewing and fillings bags for children who come to homeless shelters. Fill them with toilet articles (hand towel, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, comb), coloring books and crayons, pencils, pens, toys or other treats. Check to see if local dentists might donate toothbrushes; banks might donate pens and pencils.

Let us share your good ideas with readers. Send them to Women in Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

A gift to missions for each baby born into a family of the church, including grandchildren and great-grandchildren of members, resulted in one southern church honoring 16 babies in the past year, making it possible for many other babies to be cared for in our world. Is this an idea with appeal for your group?

Mennonite Voices in Dialogue: Women Doing Theology, June 23-25, 1994, Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio. A forum for Mennonite and Brethren in Christ women theologians and biblical scholars and all those interested in working at issues of women and theology. Sponsored by MCC U.S. Women's Concerns and Bluffton College. For more information or to share ideas, contact Tina Mast Burnett, MCC U.S. Womens Concerns, 21 South 12th St., P. O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. Telephone (717) 859-3889.

Jubilee

GOD'S GOOD NEWS

Jubilee, Jubilee! After many years of careful and prayerful work, our new Sunday school curriculum, *Jubilee: God's Good News* is available for the 1994 fall quarter. WM has a history of supporting production of biblically based Anabaptist material. Praise God for this enormous effort and for the wonderful results. Well done, writers and producers from General Conference Commission on Education!

FORECAST

In our summer issue we will explore the question: How does God call us to use our resources of time, money and personality?

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt.

Committee recommends integration

Sarasota, Fla.—The General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) should become one denomination by the year 2003.

This is one of seven recommendations proposed by the Integration Exploration Committee (IEC), which met here Feb. 20-22.

Their recommendations go to the general boards of the two groups, which meet in March (GC) and April (MC). Members of IEC refused to disclose the full text of the recommendations until both boards respond to them.

Once the boards affirm a set of recommendations, IEC plans to obtain more feedback from area conferences and congregations. A final set of recommendations will go to the two boards in the spring of 1995. Then delegates to the two denominational bodies will vote on these at Wichita '95, to be held July 25-30, 1995, in Wichita, Kan.

While full integration is called for by 2003, programs for mission and service, congregational resources, publishing and higher education should proceed with integration in the interim, according to IEC's recommendations. The MC and GC general boards, in consultation with the Canadian and U.S. conferences, would guide this process.

IEC members spent part of their meeting going over responses from congregations to an integration packet that had gone to every GC and MC area conference for distribution to member churches. Leland Harder and John Zielke tabulated responses from 193 congregations and groups and produced a 35-page report. Responses are still coming in.

Two thumbs up: According to responses to a five-point integration scale (see box), 53.1 percent of MC, 63.3 percent of GC and 68.8 percent of dual-conference members favor integration (points one and two).

Nevertheless, a number of congregations expressed concern about and opposition to integration. One concern is the difference in polity, how the groups make decisions and set policy. Another concern is about bureaucracy—whether integration will in fact simplify program administration.

Program ministries have been working on doing more in common, but it has not been easy. "GC staff feel they're more active in working on integration than their MC counterparts," said Vern Preheim, the GC general secretary.

His counterpart, Jim Lapp, said that "because [MC] program boards are not united, it doesn't get on the agenda as quickly." Alice Roth, on staff with Mennonite Board of Missions (MC), added that "structure is not the most important agenda item. ... It's such a time of transition [that] it's probably better to be working together more anyway."

One of the questions the IEC has faced as it looks at integration models

The vote is (not quite) in

A survey based on response forms from a packet sent to churches offers these percentages of MCs, GCs and dual-conference church members favoring integration (3.5 percent of members, 13 percent of congregations responded):

percent that	MC	GC	dual conference	all
1. favor integration soon	6.8	16.0	19.9	9.2
2. favor gradual integration	46.3	47.3	48.9	46.6
3. remain undecided	24.3	19.2	24.2	23.2
4. say it does not matter	8.1	8.8	5.4	8.2
5. oppose integration	14.4	8.7	1.6	12.8
	99.9	100.0	100.0	100.0

Inside the news

MCC plans broader programs, bigger budgets / p. 14

Where trust meets ambiguity / p. 15

MCC U.S. hashes out health-care stance / p. 16

Disaster service looks to grow / p. 16

Bluffton shelters Bosnian students / p. 17

The General Conference Mennonite Church received $4,618,009 or 92.9 percent of its $4,972,703 budget for the 1993 fiscal year, which ended Jan. 31, reports Ted Stuckey, business manager and treasurer.

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A "building blitz" will be held the first two weeks of April at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., to renovate the dormitory into a learning center. The seminary is calling for volunteers to assist in the effort. Contact Ed Peters, volunteer coordinator, at (219) 295-8863.

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In response to growing awareness about sexual misconduct among ministers, the Southeast Conference of the Mennonite Church is requiring its ministers to sign a code of sexual ethics. The code says, "As a minister of Jesus Christ and as a representative of the church within its office of ministry, I accept and subscribe to these affirmations," which include "[ministers] accept their unique responsibility to define and maintain appropriate boundaries," that "sexual abuse and immorality are causes for discipline within the church," that ministers "call each other to account and to ... confront the colleague" and that they "accept their obligation to disclose information regarding previous sexual violations ... prior to formal candidacy for a new ministry position."

Peace scholar and activist Elise Boulding was one of four keynote speakers at a three-day global studies conference Feb. 18-20 at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Boulding called participants to change their mental map of the planet. Instead of seeing the globe divided into nation-states, she suggested seeing it as a large household. She challenged participants to live daily, to pray and to dream locally, to celebrate and to listen. Panel discussions throughout the weekend featured educators and field workers in environment, development and peace.

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Carol Ann Weaver, associate professor of music at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., addressed Kenyan women's music at the college's Benjamin Eby Lecture Feb. 13. Weaver said gender study in musicology is a new phenomenon. She said there is a coming of age for women in Kenya. Women's musical themes, which include election outcomes, political change and repressive conditions for women, are becoming means of social and political change.

is how national and binational agenda are handled in a new structure. IEC member George Brunk III presented a paper of "reflections" on the binational and national dimensions of integration. The basic thrust of the paper is that both are important and must be held in balance. Other members agreed, although Florence Driedger objected to the term "binational," which she said is "just as limiting as 'national.'"

IEC members Helmut Harder, Jim Lapp and Vern Preheim had drafted a "Proposed Division of Ministries in an Integrated Church," which also showed a balance among ministries under North American, U.S., Canadian and area conference administration.

National bodies: The Conference of Mennonites in Canada (GC) is moving toward integration of all Canadian conferences, MC and GC. In the United States, however, there is no comparable body. A U.S. Assembly (GC) meets every three years, but the MC has no U.S. structure. Looking at the new integration model, IEC ad hoc member Kerry Strayer pointed out, "an integrated U.S. structure needs to be created."

At each IEC meeting the committee meets with the host area conference(s). Four members of the Southeast Conference (MC) executive committee met with the committee and offered no objections to integration. They only counseled that the process go slowly in order not to lose churches.

The IEC is also meeting with representatives of what the MC calls associate groups: Native, African-American, Hispanic and Asian leaders as well as women's and men's groups. How would these fit into an integrated structure? The consensus, after some discussion, seemed to be that these groups could relate the same way area conferences do, with each group having a representative on an integrated General Board. George Brunk III summed up the sense of most members when he said, "These groups will want to relate in an ecclesial sense rather than a missional sense."

Another group neglected thus far has been South American congregations that are GC members. The IEC decided to meet with representatives from the three countries in South America with GC churches and ask how they want to relate to a new structure.

When it came time to decide on the recommendations, the group kept two things in mind: (1) they are an "exploration" committee, and (2) they have been criticized for not showing enough passion. Co-chair Nelson Schiefele said, "It's time to declare ourselves." After a period of silence, members affirmed that the two denominations should become one. "Given a common confession of faith and a common vision statement," said Alice Roth, "let's make the two one."

Co-chair James Gingerich asked, "Are we integrated if the [area] conferences are not?" Eventually everyone said yes.

Richard Early wanted to assure people "that we're committed to decentralization." Helmut Harder wanted to assure people "that we will respect disciplines [like prayer coverings]."

Early said that some will ask what the new name is going to be. The IEC does not make such a decision. (In the responses from congregations, the name most often suggested was "The Mennonite Church.")

In the end the committee agreed on its recommendations. The next IEC meeting is Sept. 17-19 in Newton, Kan.
Gordon Houser

MCC plans newer projects and bigger budgets

Sarasota, Fla., (MCC)—The Mennonite Central Committee board approved 1994 program plans that include MCC workers in 50 countries and partnerships with agencies in another 26 countries at its annual meeting here Feb. 18-19.

New program initiatives include: $300,000 for a project to clear unexploded ordnance from the Laotian countryside, a plan not yet approved by the Laotian government; $50,000 to provide food for displaced Azerbaijani people in Iran; $75,000 for a milk powder project; and $35,000 for a Brussels, Belgium, mediation center and Balkan peace initiatives.

Paul Myers, director of Self-Help Crafts, reported on its plan to double sales in the next five years. "This is ambitious, but we are confident and feel support for it," Myers said.

A portion of the five-year increase is blueprinted to come from a direct-mail catalog to be launched in the United

States this coming fall.

Budget: The board passed a 1994 cash budget of $23.7 million, up 4.2 percent from 1993.

This calls for U.S. cash contributions of $8.3 million and Canadian cash contributions of $3.8 million. Grants, Self-Help Crafts sales and other income are budgeted to make up the remaining income.

The 1994 budget also calls for $9.8 million worth of material resources, up $2 million from 1993 but less than the $12 million shipped in 1992. Countries receiving the lion's share of MCC food since 1991 are Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, India, Angola, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Bangladesh, Iraq, Nicaragua and the former Soviet Union.

Islam: The board affirmed the goal of strengthening its program within Islamic contexts as one of MCC's five goals for the next three years.

MCC plans to increase its witness and work with Muslims because of the growing fears between followers of Christianity and of Islam. "In the midst of the growing enmity between our culture and the Islamic world, we want to build relationships of friendship and conciliation between Mennonites and Muslims," said Ray Brubacher, director of overseas programs.

MCC's four other goals for the coming three years are increased education in North America, increased exchanges, an increased emphasis on conciliation and increased emphases on job creation and income generation.

Youth: The past two years have been "my most unsettling years with MCC," said Waldo Neufeld, director of MCC British Columbia, who has been with MCC 21 of the past 30 years. "British Columbia youth want exposure to world needs and hands-on experience; they are increasingly turning to ... other agencies."

MCC service assignments often require training and experience, he continued. "Our programs place individuals rather than groups of youth—youth want to do things with their friends, not alone. And our tendency to emphasize 'presence' does not sell well to youth who want to make a difference in the world," Neufeld said.

Board members encouraged staff to reach youth in flexible, creative ways.

An MCC magazine: The board also gave an initial "yes" to a proposal by Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker, MCC communications director, to start a bimonthly magazine targeted to MCC supporters ages 25 to 40.

The publication, planned to replace *MCC Contact*, will be launched this fall, pending approval by MCC Canada, a review of other MCC newsletters and the completion of a survey of people within the targeted age group. *Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker*

COMMENTARY

Sessions raise questions of trust and ambiguity

Sarasota, Fla. (Meetinghouse)—Doing mission is not as simple as we may want it to be. The annual Mennonite Central Committee meetings here Feb. 17-19 served to illustrate this point.

Only a mile or two away, some 250 media people watched Michael Jordan swing a bat at a baseball. MCC's meeting received little media attention.

While some concern themselves with whether or not the basketball star can succeed in professional baseball, MCC's board members struggled with difficult issues that arise when doing relief and development work around the world.

One thrust of MCC, which received attention at the meetings, is to improve education of North American constituents. This arises out of "hot" issues that stir the ire of North American constituents.

Words before deeds? Some constituents, who support providing for needy people, take issue with MCC's approach to more ambiguous situations. Many protested when MCC helped rebuild a Buddhist pagoda (see story, page 10) and when MCC considered taking the words "In the Name of Christ" off MCC canned meat sent to Muslim countries. The words of the mission get more attention than the deeds. Many want MCC's message to be pure.

The problem is, language is complex. Also, as one board member said, "We can't eliminate ambiguities." MCC workers face situations of great complexity with no easy solution or approach. The fact is, our churches in North America also face complex situations without easy solutions.

The question we all must face is this:

First Mennonite Church, Urbana, Ill., celebrated its 30th anniversary Feb. 6.

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The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund is holding a legislative seminar May 25-27. Registration is $75. For more information contact NCPTF at (202) 483-3751.

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The 38th annual Pennsylvania Relief Sale will be held April 1-2 at the Harrisburg (Pa.) Farm Show building. There is an open house at 4 p.m., April 1, with the sale starting at 6:30 p.m. and continuing all day April 2.

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The Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE) will hold a Congress on Urban Ministry April 11-14 in Chicago. Speakers include Jim Wallis and Cornel West. Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary participates in SCUPE. Contact SCUPE at (312) 726-1200.

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The date and location of the joint Pacific District Conference, Southwest Mennonite Conference and Pacific Coast Conference meeting has been changed. The date has moved from June 16-19 to June 23-26. The assembly will be held in Reedley, Calif. Contact the Southwest Conference office at (310) 927-7088 with any questions.

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The Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary board focused on recruitment issues at its meetings Feb. 10-12 in Elkhart, Ind. Discussion focused on the qualifications of people enrolling and the needs in congregations. The board appointed a recruitment committee. It also encouraged AMBS to keep working at bringing theological education to people through programs like off-campus educational opportunities.

Winnipeg's Mediation Services will be one of the organizations featured in a National Film Board of Canada documentary about alternatives to the present judicial system. The NFB plans to include the Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba-sponsored organization in the documentary, which will feature alternative ways to deal with crime and conflict. The film could take one to three years to complete.

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The second Mennonite Arts Weekend, sponsored by the Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship Feb. 4-6, featured poetry, music, dance, mime, comedy and visual art. From a juried selection of 125 poems from Midwestern Mennonite youth, 22 were selected for a book, *Living Mirror: Young Mennonite Artists.* The book is available for $6 from Cynthia Stayrook, 233 Emming St., Cincinnati, OH 45219. The next arts weekend will be held in February 1996.

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A video focusing on black-white prejudice in North America has been unexpectedly effective with Chinese students, reports Commission on Overseas Mission teacher Todd Friesen from Beijing, China. Todd and Denette Alwine, his wife, showed the video *Beyond the News: Racism* to their students at Beijing University of Science and Technology. "Chinese students often ask about racism in the United States," says Friesen. "I felt [the video] gave an honest picture of the church—something students here know little about—struggling with an 'American' issue that is regularly featured in the Chinese press." Friesen was surprised that the segment on the church was the most interesting segment to the students. "How each of us [visualizes] God was especially intriguing to them," says Friesen.

Can we struggle with the ambiguities we face? Further, can we trust MCC as it struggles with situations even more complex, since those involve communicating across cultures as well as across religious lines?

MCC board members, who sit as representatives of their respective denominations, had little to say beyond acknowledging that MCC needs to keep all the various constituencies in mind. Some may want to say, "We must simply proclaim Christ." But the ambiguities seem to silence such simplistic statements. All may agree that we must act "in the name of Christ." The difficult question is how that's done in each situation.

Tangible trust: In regard to trust, the evidence indicates that people do give MCC their trust. In fact, if giving trends are an indication, they seem to trust MCC more than their own denominations. Many have offered theories why this is so. For example, people would rather give food to the hungry than have their money go toward less tangible ministries in their own denomination.

A controversy may erupt, like the debate about supporting the building of a pagoda, but most people seem to give MCC the benefit of the doubt.

However, if people realize that MCC struggles with ambiguity, why don't they also realize that denominations also struggle with similar issues?

Trying to discern how to help people around the world "in the name of Christ" is not as simple as determining whether or not Michael Jordan stays in professional baseball, and it won't get the same attention in the larger media. The answers come through difficult day-to-day work. Simplistic statements won't help. *Gordon Houser*

MCC U.S. questions health-care stance

Sarasota, Fla. (MCC)—The executive committee's May 1993 endorsement of a federally financed single-payer model caused contention at Mennonite Central Committee U.S. board meetings held here Feb. 17. Several representatives to the 29-member board expressed discomfort with the endorsement.

Board members had mixed opinions. Some said the Washington Office's role is to advocate for poor people with whom MCC U.S. service workers relate.

Others feel the Washington Office should be a resource to Mennonites, including Mennonite health organizations such as Mennonite Health Services and Mennonite Mutual Aid.

The question became, Would advocating for the poor and representing Mennonite health organizations sometimes be at odds with one another?

Wilma Bailey of Grantham, Pa., said Mennonite health institutions likely represent middle-class interests more than low-income interests.

"I would not want to hand the Washington Office a task of representing two conflicting interests," said Susan Goering of Baltimore.

Others disagreed. "I am willing to saddle them with that [task] because I think the Washington Office should be a place where Mennonites can come together," said Phil Rich. "We have to be careful that MCC U.S. not go off on its own and not share the burden with other Mennonites deeply involved in this issue."

Budget: The board approved a 1994 expense budget of $4.35 million U.S./$5.8 million Can. This budget represents a 5 percent increase over 1993's actual expenditures.

New 1994 programs include a short-term learning and service program in Chicago, a refugee assistance worker in Albuquerque, N.M., and a doubling of the number of service internships—a year-long program for young adults of diverse ethnic backgrounds—from four to eight.

MDS revamps for a new era

Homestead, Fla. (MCC)—The Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) board agreed to strengthen the organization's disaster preparedness at its meeting here Feb. 10.

Recognizing this may mean extra work for existing staff, board members recommended restructuring the office and increasing the staff by one to 1 1/2 full-time positions.

MDS has set a budget of $510,000 for 1994, four percent higher than 1993. Last year, due to the Midwestern floods, contributions doubled the budgeted amount, with over half designated for the Midwestern floods.

Current changes in the nature of disaster relief prompted the decision to expand. Monte Sahlin, chair of National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters, points to three significant occurrences in the response to Hurricane Andrew: massive evacuations, military involvement and the unprecedented role of information systems.

Lowell Detweiler, executive coordinator of MDS, points to another shift: "Once listed as one of the three major disaster response agencies [along with the Red Cross and the Salvation Army], we are now only one of over 200 who responded in south Florida," he said in a recent report.

With the explosion in groups and individuals wanting to help, organization has become an issue.

Some suggest that if the volunteer organizations do not come up with an inclusive disaster response plan, the government may do it for them. Whereas MDS has enjoyed a lot of freedom in the past, that is likely to change.

Bluffton shelters Bosnian students

Bluffton, Ohio (BC)—Two Bosnian Muslim students have come to Bluffton (Ohio) College to complete college educations cut short by the war in their homeland.

Fatima Mujcinovic, a senior majoring in English and Spanish, and Edin Mehmedovic, a junior student in economics, are refugees of the war in the former republic of Yugoslavia. The students left Eastern Europe in January and, after spending 15 days of acclimatization in New York, arrived at Bluffton College on Feb. 6.

When the war broke out, Fatima was just a few weeks from graduation at the University of Sarajevo. She was with members of her senior class on a trip to Tunisia when the siege began. Her parents, still in Sarajevo, urged her not to return to the city, so she went to Zagreb, where she stayed until leaving for the United States last month.

Back to books: "When the war started and I could not return home, I could not even think about studying," said Fatima. "Now I am ready to study again." Before the war Fatima had planned to continue her education in the United States or Great Britain after graduation. By coming to Bluffton, she will be able to receive her degree and go on to graduate school.

Edin was a student the University of Zagreb in Croatia. His parents, teachers who fled the country for Slovakia at the beginning of the war, run an elementary school for Bosnian refugees in Slovakia. Although the university is still in session, the Croatian government has imposed extremely high tuition and housing fees on Bosnian students, now considered refugees and foreigners. And the political situation threatens the safety of Bosnian Muslim students in Croatia.

Mujcinovic and Mehmedovic came to the United States through the Bosnian Student Project, a joint project of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Jerrahi Order of America. The project attempts to get students out of the war zone and enrolled in U.S. schools. *Joanne Niswander*

Ron Geiser (Bluffton College)

Safe haven: *Mujcinovic (left) and Mehmedovic (center) speak with Bluffton president Elmer Neufeld on arrival at the college. The two will resume their studies, disrupted by Bosnia's war.*

Last year the city of Los Angeles spent more than $2 million on a fingerprint system to catch welfare cheaters, reports *Baptist Peacemaker.* They nabbed 11. Cost per cheater: $207,532. (*Marketplace*)

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John Paul Lederach received the 1994 Bethel College Young Alumnus Award Feb. 28. Lederach, who graduated from Bethel in 1980, serves as associate professor of sociology at Eastern Mennonite College in Harrisonburg, Va., and director of International Conciliation Service for Mennonite Central Committee. Known for his work in international mediation, Lederach has mediated in Canada, Spain, the Netherlands, England, the Philippines, Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, Argentina and throughout Central America.

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Two U.S. lawmakers are introducing legislation to restrict the transfer of U.S. weapons to nations that abuse human rights. Mennonite Central Committee U.S. has joined a coalition to support the legislation, generally referred to as the "Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers." Senator Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., is introducing the initiative in the Senate, and Representative Cynthia McKinney, D-Ga., will introduce it in the House. Ninety-six percent of Americans say the United States should not sell or give weapons to governments that abuse human rights, according to a recent survey by the National Security News Service. But of the $35 billion in arms that the United States sold or gave abroad in 1993, $25 billion went to governments the U.S. State Department acknowledges do not allow citizens to choose their leaders democratically, says Keith Gingrich of the MCC U.S. Washington Office.

Record

AMBS—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service

What is it about jail that coaxes out the entrepreneurial instinct? Toronto *Globe and Mail* reports a survey by Britain's Cranfield School of Management showing that ex-offenders make better entrepreneurs than the general population, and are 30 percent more likely to set themselves up in business. (*Marketplace*)

* * *

Banks in South Carolina deny loans to black applicants at a much higher rate than whites, according to a study that examined 51,000 loan applications filed in 1992. The study, conducted by the Charleston *Post and Courier*, found the racial imbalance spread across income levels. The newspaper reported Feb. 20 that blacks were about three times more likely to have mortgage applications rejected than whites. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

* * *

DeNeen L. Brown in the Washington *Post* reports on children planning their own funerals. Brown tells of "Howard, a ninth-grader, [who] has told friends that if he should die soon, he wants his funeral to be 'different than everybody else's. I don't want my funeral to be in a church. I want it at Rollins Funeral Home, and I want to be buried at Harmony Memorial Park. I want to wear sweats and tennis shoes.'" Howard's mother has talked with her children about the possibility of early death. "Bullets don't have any names. You can be anywhere and get hit," she says. Douglas Marlowe, a psychologist at Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia, says children often become fascinated with death during adolescence. But he says planning a funeral is not normal. "Once they start planning their own funerals, they have given up. They are not trying to conquer death anymore," he says. "They are now turning themselves over." (*Context*)

MINISTERS

Arlyn and **Judith Friesen Epp** have resigned as assistant pastors at Vineland (Ont.) United Church, effective April 30.

David Feick has resigned as pastor at Superb (Sask.) Church, effective June 30.

Ben Friesen is serving as interim pastor at Kingman (Kan.) Church.

Ernie Hildebrand has resigned as pastor at Springstein (Man.) Church, effective June 30. He will become pastor at Trinity Fellowship, Mather, Man., in September.

Karla Kaufman will serve as half-time pastor at Fort Collins (Colo.) Fellowship beginning in May.

Henry Patkau will retire as pastor at Lowe Farm (Man.) Church June 30.

Randy Smith will conclude his ministry at Hope Church, Fort Worth, Texas, in July.

Irena Sprunger has retired as assistant visitation minister at First Church, Berne, Ind.

WORKERS

Edna Dyck, Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., has resigned from her position as editor and copy editor for Faith & Life Press in Newton, effective March 31. She has served with the Commission on Education since 1978.

Patrice and **Ron Flaming**, Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., returned to India after a two-month North America Assignment for the Commission on Overseas Mission. They serve at Woodstock School, Mussoorie, India, Ron as principal, Patrice as counselor.

Ingrid and **Jake Friesen**, Blumenort Church, Rosetown, Man., are beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, as community development workers.

Imbenzi George, Clearbrook, B.C., has been elected to the board of MCC as member-at-large. He replaces **David Chiu.**

Henry Poettcker, Winnipeg, was named president emeritus of Mennonite Biblical Seminary in February.

Lois Thieszen Preheim, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., has been appointed to the board of AMBS. She fills the unexpired term of **Joan Wiebe**, Aurora, Colo.

Garry Prieb, Discovery Community Mennonite Brethren Church, Campbell River, B.C., will begin as executive secretary of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission Aug. 1.

Miles Reimer has resigned as MVS associate director for Canada, effective in May. He and **Kathy Landis** will share the position of MVS associate director for western United States.

Rodney Sawatsky has resigned as president of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., to become president of Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.

Mary H. Schertz received tenure in February at AMBS. She was also named associate professor of New Testament.

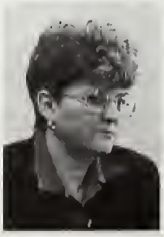
Ben Sprunger, Neil Avenue Church, Columbus, Ohio, is the new president of Mennonite Economic Development Associates. He replaces **Lee Delp**.

P. Flaming

R. Flaming

I. Friesen

J. Friesen


Preheim

Prieb

Sprunger

Female residence hall director at Goshen College. Will be responsible for the administration of one or more halls housing about 200 students. Responsibilities include representing the Student Development Division in the hall and presenting student needs and concerns to the administration. The director also counsels students, enforces policies and standards, handles discipline and educational programming and selects, trains and supervises student staff. A bachelor's degree and at least two years of related work experience required; a master's degree preferred. Minority people encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Contact **Norman Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7539.**

Mennonite Conciliation Service is sponsoring two workshops:

- **Advanced Consulting Skills for Group and Congregational Intervention**, April 28-30, 1994, Akron, Pa. Leaders are David Brubaker and Nancy Good Sider. Using systems theory principles as a framework, this training will focus on assessment and intervention in group (especially congregational) conflicts. Participants will review assessment materials, work with designing intervention processes and practice using group discussion and decision-making tools. (Prerequisite: experience in mediation and/or group consulting.)

- **MCS 10th Annual Summer Mediation Training Institute**, July 11-15, 1994, Akron, Pa. Leaders are Carolyn Schrock-Shenk, Regina Shands Stoltzfus, Jim Stutzman. A basic skills and concepts experience, the MCS Summer Institute introduces participants to the interpersonal mediation process and to group facilitation principles and tools. Hands-on practice sessions and discussions of the roles of culture, power and ethics in conflict resolution make for a rich exploration of practical peacemaking.

For more information contact **Debra Gingerich, Mennonite Conciliation Service, Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-3889.**

Cross Cultural Crafts, a Self-Help crafts store located in Glen Ellyn, Ill. (a suburb of Chicago), is seeking a full-time **manager** to begin in mid-May.

For more information, contact **Ron Ringenberg, (708) 690-5415.**

The **Commission on Overseas Mission** has volunteer service opportunities in **teaching English in Japan and Taiwan.**

- In Miyazaki, Japan, the several Mennonite congregations are seeking an English teacher for various age groups (children, youth, adults) to begin as soon as possible.
- In Hualien, Taiwan, a teacher is being sought for teaching English in several settings: village youth, Sunday school youth, Bible studies with hospital staff and neighborhood Bible study.

Couples or singles can be placed in either location. Overseas Mission Volunteers receive travel and maintenance costs and a personal allowance.

For more information and/or application forms, contact **COM, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100; fax (316) 283-0454; E-mail CompuServe 72147,2746**
or
COM, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4; (204) 888-6781; fax (204) 831-5674; E-mail CompuServe 74650,2012

Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada invites applications for the half-time position of **student and young adult minister** for an initial three-year term (starting date negotiable). General responsibilities: to serve as a resource, work in the planning of events and encourage the development of various networks for the student and young adult ministries in the conference and its 90 congregations; in consultation with the student and young adult committee of the education and nurture commission. Experience with young adults and theological backgrounds are beneficial. Salary and benefits in accordance with pastoral salary guidelines.

Please direct applications, with resumé and references, or inquiries **by April 15** to **Student and Young Adult Search Committee, c/o Mary Burkholder, executive secretary, Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, 4489-4497 King St. E., Kitchener, ON N2G 3W6; (519) 650-3806.**

Director of Historical Committee for the **Mennonite Church.** Provide direction for heritage work of Historical Committee (an agency of the Mennonite Church's General Board): communicate heritage vision to enhance Mennonite identity, network and encourage people/programs related to Mennonite history, administer archival program in consultation with archivist, prepare budget/grant proposals. Applicant should know and appreciate Anabaptist-Mennonite history and faith, communicate effectively, display initiative and organizational skills, be able to work with inter-Mennonite agencies and groups, and be open to all ethnic groups, genders, ages. Salary approximately $34,000 plus benefits/travel. Complete job description available on request.

Send resumé with three references **by March 30** to **Arlin D. Lapp, 515 Oaklyn Ave., Harleysville, PA 19438.**

Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada invites applications for the full-time position of **Christian education minister** (starting date negotiable). Primary responsibilities in resourcing, training, networking and programming with the 90 congregations of the conference in the areas of children's and adult education ministries, in consultation with the Christian education committee of the education and nurture commission. Education and theological backgrounds are beneficial. Salary and benefits in accordance with pastoral salary guidelines.

Please direct applications, with resumé and references, or inquiries **by April 15** to **Christian Education Search Committee, c/o Mary Burkholder, executive secretary, Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, 4489-4497 King St. E., Kitchener, ON N2G 3W6; (519) 650-3806.**

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Offer expires May 1, 1994. TM394

Mennonite Central Committee is recruiting participants for two **Youth Discovery Teams:**

- A singing team to **Colombia** will run December 1994 to May 1995. Applicants must be 18 to 24, Hispanic, speak Spanish, be U.S. citizens and strong singers. Non-Hispanic Spanish speakers will be considered after June 15.
- A singing team to **Zambia** (Brethren in Christ Church) will run January to August 1995. Applicants must be 18 to 24 and strong singers. Applications for both teams are **due June 15.**

Contact MCC, **Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1151.**

Harvest help wanted: mid-May through August.

Contact: **Lance Martens, Custom Harvesting, (316) 463-2426.**

Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa., is seeking an **assistant pastor** on a full-time basis. Work will have a strong emphasis on youth, but will include visiting, preaching, etc.

For more details, contact **Pastor Gary Stenson, 630 York Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446; or call (215) 855-7718**, 7 a.m. to noon (Eastern time) Monday and Tuesday.

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May 12-13, 1994 • Conference Fee: $50

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MCC Supportive Care Services seeks a

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MCC SCS supports people with disabilities through a variety of residential and vocational programs.

Responsibilities:

- to provide pastoral support in crisis and short term counseling for people with disabilities and their families
- to liaise with and provide awareness and education opportunities for local churches regarding inclusion of people with disabilities and their families

Requirements:

- theological education and pastoral experience
- post graduate counseling training
- experience in relating with and supporting people with disabilities

Apply in writing to:
Mr. Kim Seebach
MCC Supportive Care Services
Box 2460
Clearbrook, BC V2T 4X3

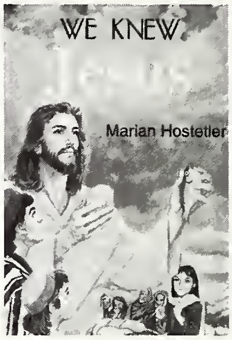
Application deadline:
April 15, 1994

Stories from your favorite Mennonite authors

About Jesus . . .

We Knew Jesus

by Marian Hostetler



Here are 14 Bible-based stories from young people who meet Jesus. They see Jesus bringing health to body and spirit:

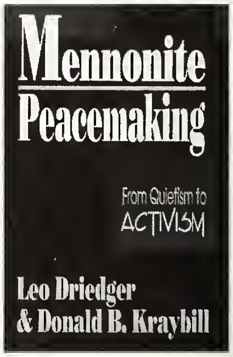
- Miriam, Jesus' little sister, watching him
- Janna, restored from death
- Porcius, whose pigs drown when Jesus heals
- Rufus, delivered from having seizures
- Jerusha, spying on Jesus from a tree
- Korah, hearing Jesus debate with Pharisees
- Joanna, seeing her dad crucified with Jesus
- Others, waiting for us to read about them.

This book is written for grades 4 through 8 and up. Marian Hostetler, of Elkhart, Ind., is a teacher with 16 years of overseas service and author of 8 books.
Paper, $5.95; in Canada $7.75.

About Mennonites . . .

Mennonite Peacemaking: From Quietism to Activism

by Leo Driedger and Donald B. Kraybill



"The message suggests that if we remember who we are in God's call, struggle faithfully to incarnate Christ, patiently wait for the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, and covenant together in common purpose, there will continue to be vitality and renewal in Mennonite peacemaking."—from the foreword by John A. Lapp, Executive Secretary, Mennonite Central Committee

These pages tell the engaging story of how the timid were transformed into activists.

Leo Driedger is professor of sociology at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Man. Donald B. Kraybill is professor of sociology at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College.
Paper, $14.95; in Canada $19.50.

Available through your local bookstore or by calling 1 800 759-4447; in Canada call 519 746-2872 (Provident Bookstores—MC, Visa, Discover). If ordering by mail, please include 10% for shipping—minimum $2.50. Canadian customers, add 7% of total for GST.

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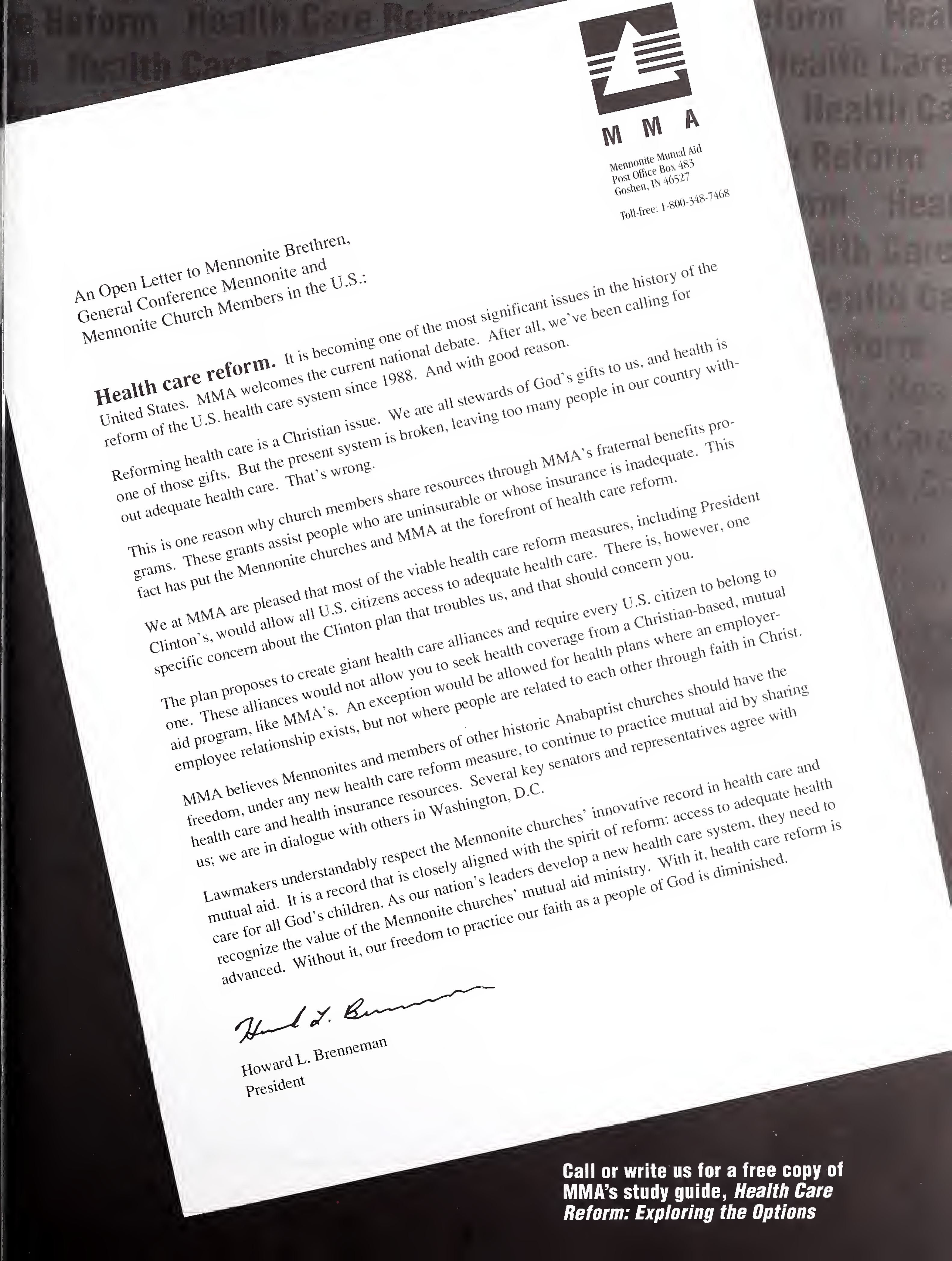

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An Open Letter to Mennonite Brethren,
General Conference Mennonite and
Mennonite Church Members in the U.S.:

Health care reform. It is becoming one of the most significant issues in the history of the United States. MMA welcomes the current national debate. After all, we've been calling for reform of the U.S. health care system since 1988. And with good reason.

Reforming health care is a Christian issue. We are all stewards of God's gifts to us, and health is one of those gifts. But the present system is broken, leaving too many people in our country without adequate health care. That's wrong.

This is one reason why church members share resources through MMA's fraternal benefits programs. These grants assist people who are uninsurable or whose insurance is inadequate. This fact has put the Mennonite churches and MMA at the forefront of health care reform.

We at MMA are pleased that most of the viable health care reform measures, including President Clinton's, would allow all U.S. citizens access to adequate health care. There is, however, one specific concern about the Clinton plan that troubles us, and that should concern you.

The plan proposes to create giant health care alliances and require every U.S. citizen to belong to one. These alliances would not allow you to seek health coverage from a Christian-based, mutual aid program, like MMA's. An exception would be allowed for health plans where an employer-employee relationship exists, but not where people are related to each other through faith in Christ.

MMA believes Mennonites and members of other historic Anabaptist churches should have the freedom, under any new health care reform measure, to continue to practice mutual aid by sharing health care and health insurance resources. Several key senators and representatives agree with us; we are in dialogue with others in Washington, D.C.

Lawmakers understandably respect the Mennonite churches' innovative record in health care and mutual aid. It is a record that is closely aligned with the spirit of reform: access to adequate health care for all God's children. As our nation's leaders develop a new health care system, they need to recognize the value of the Mennonite churches' mutual aid ministry. With it, health care reform is advanced. Without it, our freedom to practice our faith as a people of God is diminished.

Howard L. Brenneman
President

Call or write us for a free copy of MMA's study guide, *Health Care Reform: Exploring the Options*

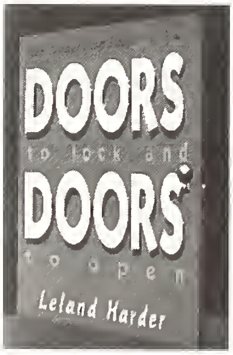
BOOKS

Unstick sticky issues

Doors to Lock and Doors to Open *by Leland Harder (Herald Press, 1993, 183 pages)*

Reviewed by Floyd G. Bartel, Newton, Kan.

This is not a book one will read in one sitting, nor is it bedtime reading. The first part is slow going, but it picks up as the writer deals with specific disagreements across our denominations.



Leland Harder is one of the two sociologists who directed a study of Anabaptists in 1972 and again in 1989. In *Doors to Lock and Doors to Open* Harder uses the results of those surveys to develop a study text for local congregations. Teachings from Scripture and church history and discussion questions augment each chapter.

This book is one every member of the five denominations—General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren, Evangelical Mennonite and Brethren in Christ—would find helpful. It gives us a way to reflect on changes and to talk through disagreements. Harder presents disagreements descriptively, respecting the various perspectives. This strength of the book should make it usable in all types of Anabaptist churches.

Harder adapts Rodney Sawatsky's four types of Anabaptist churches: separatist, conservative, liberal and transformist. These types identify the perspectives he found in our churches.

This book aims to help churches become more effective communities of discernment. The first five chapters are devoted to the meaning and process of discernment. Chapters six through 13 deal issue by issue with questions that need further discernment: How do we become Christian? How do we regard our Mennonite/Anabaptist identity? Can baptism and church membership be separated? What are the role and expectation of pastors? How are we to be peacemakers? Can women be leaders in the church? Should we be involved in politics? What about such moral issues as abortion, capital punishment and homosexuality?

The groups that are courageous enough and disciplined enough to work their way through this book will certainly benefit. Their love for one another will become more meaningful.

Stop racism early

Challenging Racism *by Jody Miller Shearer (Fast Lane Bible Studies for Junior High Series, Faith & Life Press, 1993, 42 pages)*

Reviewed by Marlene Bogard, Newton, Kan.

On moving to Kansas three years ago, my heart was warmed when both of our sons became close friends with boys who happened to be Hispanic. Other than eating a few foods that were new to them, and one of them noting that his friend had a father named "Jesus" (our son pronounced it with a J), our boys seemed to recognize no other differences. So when a friend from South Dakota was looking at some birthday party photos, saw the friends and mentioned that her children would most likely never have interracial friendships, I thought, "Oh, I never saw it in that way."

In this, the first in the series of Fast Lane Bible Studies for junior highs, Jody Miller Shearer helps young people examine racial prejudice and challenges them to work at changing systems that oppress people of color.

For many Mennonite churches this curriculum may be the first time junior highs are challenged with the ideas that Shearer offers. Through the four sessions and the suggested activities youth will learn to become critical of how the media often portray people of color, to identify barriers of racial prejudice that keep people apart and to discover the privileges they have been given.

I like the way this curriculum is presented. The steps for teaching are clear, the type is large and the graphics and artwork are useful. The publishers have done their best to package the curriculum with appealing and easy-to-follow layout. In addition, it is versatile enough to be used in a variety of settings: retreats and camp-

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Lands of the Bible September 6-20 Ken and Kass Seitz

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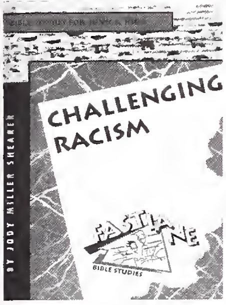
outs, midweek or Sunday school.

Each of the four sessions includes a reproducible handout and options for hands-on activities during the "apply and respond" times. The Scriptures that are used throughout fit well with the accompanying lesson options. The tips for teaching and understanding junior highs under the heading, "Junior High Is Not a Disease," are especially helpful and fun. The only activity I did not find helpful was the verse scramble. Why make kids work this hard to decipher scriptural truth?



I have spoken to someone who used this curriculum, and his response was very positive. He said, "It was easy to prepare, prompted good discussion, and it was one curriculum that I could look at and actually say, 'Yeah, this is going to work.'"

The author uses the terms "people of color" and "European-American." Although these terms may sound foreign to some youth who are accustomed to saying black, white or Asian, they are inclusive terms that reflect a more sensitive awareness.

I applaud Faith & Life Press for developing this series of materials for junior high. It is one level that is often neglected, and the kids feel that they are in limbo between "children's stuff" and "youth group stuff." *Challenging Racism* and the Fast Lane Bible Studies offer a refreshing, creative and exciting new resource for teaching and learning. I look forward to the next in the series on the Beatitudes.

Conquered by God

Love Is Like Fire; The Confession of an Anabaptist Prisoner: Written at Gmunden, Upper Austria, Between 1529 and 1532 *by Peter Riedemann, translated and edited by the Hutterian Brethren (Plough Publishing House, 1993, 74 pages)*

Reviewed by Dale Schrag, Newton, Kan.

Often called the "second founder of the Hutterian Brethren," Peter Riedemann (1506-1556) is best known for his *Rechenschaft unseres Glaubens*, written in 1540-41, a document that to this day remains the basic doctrinal statement of the Hutterites. *Love Is Like Fire* is a translated and edited version of his first doctrinal work, sometimes called the *Gmundener Rechenschaft*. Though translated and edited by the Hutterian Brethren, the *Gmundener Rechenschaft* is technically an Anabaptist document, not a Hutterite one. Riedemann did not join the Hutterites in Moravia until after he escaped from the Gmunden prison in 1532.

Love Is Like Fire is, therefore, a document representative of South German/Austrian Anabaptism in the early 16th century. It has all the characteristics of South German Anabaptism. There is a clear emphasis on discipleship. Riedemann repeatedly challenges his readers to "follow in [Christ's] footsteps." He calls for a willingness to suffer ("we should submit … in obedience to God and suffer and bear the discipline by which he makes us fit and pleasing") and to die ("we must prepare ourselves in Christ to endure cross and death"). Yet despite this obvious sense of belonging to a persecuted minority, Riedemann demonstrates a remarkable openness to human need wherever it exists. The story of the Good Samaritan, says Riedemann, shows us "that we are all one another's neighbor—whoever is in need of help or whoever gives the other help. No one is excluded." He chides the rich, who "have no thoughts whatsoever for the poor man, nor do they worry how they might show him love." Finally, *Love Is Like Fire* is suffused with the biblical spiritualism that so characterized South German and Austrian Anabaptism.

I heartily recommend this book to readers of *The Mennonite*. Riedemann offers, I think, an important corrective to some contemporary Mennonite tendencies. I am writing this review shortly after having heard an excellent sermon on peacemaking. The speaker suggested that the first step to being a peacemaker is to be "conquered by God." Were he alive today, Riedemann, I suspect, would offer a resounding amen to that suggestion. For all his talk of discipleship, for all his "this-worldly" concern, there appears to be no doubt in Riedemann's mind as to who is changing whom. At virtually every point in *Love Is Like Fire*, God is the focus—sole source of wisdom, source of empowerment, source of every good and perfect gift. "The church," says Riedemann, "is not built by men but by God." In fact, Riedemann speaks of God more frequently than of Jesus Christ. Following after Christ, for Riedemann, happens only after one is "conquered" by God. If Mennonites are guilty of assuming that they can save the world by themselves, or if Mennonites are guilty of moving from "Christocentrism" (a theology that centers on Christ) to "Christomonism" (the belief that all the attributes of God are exhausted in the person of Christ), they could be well served by a careful reading of *Love Is Like Fire*.

Resources

- **Living the Beatitudes** (Faith & Life Press, 1994, $12.95 U.S./$16.95 Can.) is the second unit in the Fast Lane Bible Studies series for junior high. It examines the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and challenges students to become followers of God. Order from FLP (800) 743-2484 or FLP Canada (204) 888-6781.
- **Heritage Celebrations: A Guide to Celebrating the History of Your Church** by Wilma McKee (Faith & Life Press, 1994, $10.95 U.S./$14.25 Can.) encourages churches to celebrate what God does in their midst and provides ideas of how to do this, including suggestions for setting goals, communicating plans and recording events.
- **Is the Bible True? Understanding the Bible Today** by David Robert Ord and Robert B. Coote (Orbis Books, 1994, $9.95 U.S.) shows how a more sophisticated understanding of the Scriptures can enhance rather than undermine faith.
- **Not Counting Women and Children** by Megan McKenna (Orbis Books, 1994, $10.95 U.S.) presents neglected stories from the Bible.
- **The Seven Last Words** by Michael H. Crosby (Orbis Books, 1994, $10.95 U.S.) reveals the implications for contemporary followers of Jesus in the final words from the cross.

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Editorial

Bright Night

Light a candle in a room flooded with electric light. Now light one in a room completely dark. Over which lighted candle will you rejoice most? Sometimes we only notice the light if it comes amid darkness. Otherwise we may ignore it.

Easter is "the earliest and most important feast of the Christian year," according to *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*. One wonders if it remains the most important feast for the church today. More and more it seems that Easter has been secularized into a kind of beginning-of-spring event, a chance to dress in our finest and let the children hunt for Easter eggs, rather than a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus.

The earliest church, we see in Acts, seems to have celebrated Christ's resurrection every Sunday. Eventually the church adopted the Sunday after Passover as its annual celebration of Easter.

Perhaps the joy—or lack of joy—we experience at Easter is related to how seriously we take the period of Lent.

The resurrection is one of the central tenets of our faith. As Paul says, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, … and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:13-14). Yet Easter comes and goes, and we give it only a passing notice.

Lent, the 40-day period of prayer, fasting and conversion before Easter, became established in the church in the seventh century. Baptismal candidates typically prepared during this time for their baptism at Easter. It used to be forbidden to celebrate marriage during this time. Today Lent is almost meaningless to most Christians.

As I grew up, my mother and I used to give up something for Lent—usually sweets or some other delicacy. But now it seems to have gone out of style. How many of us fast? How many of us give up something or take extra time to devote ourselves to prayer or penitence during Lent?

Perhaps the joy—or lack of joy—we experience at Easter is related to how seriously we take the period of Lent. I remember one year I broke a three-day fast at a sunrise service on Easter morning. My senses—physical and spiritual—seemed sharper that morning, and as I greeted others in my church with "Christ is risen" and "He is risen indeed," I rejoiced as I hadn't before.

Pascha: A friend of mine is an Eastern Orthodox Christian. People in his church fast during Lent, eating no meat, fish or dairy products. On several occasions I have attended their Easter service, which is held on the Saturday before Easter, around 11 p.m. (Eastern Orthodoxy follows the Julian calendar for setting the date for Pascha, or Easter, so it is often later than our date. This year it falls on May 1.)

The Easter service, called Bright Night, lasts about 2 1/2 hours. The liturgy includes much singing by the choir and many prayers. The service begins in a darkened sanctuary. Later everyone is given a lighted candle, and the priest leads everyone in a march around the building. The night wind sometimes snuffs the fragile flames of the candles, but we all gather by the closed doors of the church, huddling over our meager lights. The priest knocks on the large wooden doors and shouts the words from Psalm 24: "Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in."

After the priest does this three times, the doors open, and we find the sanctuary flooded with light. The change is dramatic, and your insides burst with hope and assurance that Christ is indeed risen, and that God does indeed rule the universe.

We file back in, and the service continues. Afterward, around 1:30 or 2 a.m., the men of the church serve a huge breakfast. There is enough food to put even Mennonites to shame. It's a joyous occasion as people break their fast and hug one another with, "Christ is risen; he is risen indeed."

Let us join the ancient church in celebrating joyfully the resurrection of our Lord. To aid us in that celebration, we may need to practice some fasting and prayer. May the light of our Easter worship shine brightly as we proclaim the promise of life. *Gordon Houser*

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- Can you be lawful in times that are awful? (see page 3)
- Stories of four Mennonites who refuse to pay for war (see page 6)

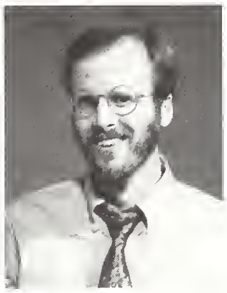
Prologue

Our Mennonite heritage includes many run-ins with the civil authorities. The first Anabaptists refused to practice infant baptism, which got many of them killed. That refusal was a kind of tax revolt, since the state taxed people whose baptisms were recorded in the church books. And some of the taxes were used to help fight the Turks.

Read Arthur Boers' account (pages 3-5) of his own run-ins with the law as he tried to be faithful to the way of Jesus Christ. Then read stories (pages 6-8) of six other Mennonites—from Canada and the United States—who have resisted paying war taxes because of their beliefs.

In her bimonthly column (page 11), Sara Wenger Shenk writes about the importance of everyday life at home in nurturing the spiritual lives of our children. And in our Bible column (page 12), Levi Keidel addresses the question many of us struggle with, Does prayer make any difference?

We continue to receive requests from prisoners who want to receive or continue receiving *The Mennonite* but cannot afford it. We have an ongoing fund for this, but that fund is nearly depleted. Anyone interested in contributing to this fund may send a check to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Thanks in advance. *gh*



Next issue: Listening to young adults

Cover: Photo by Carolyn Prieb

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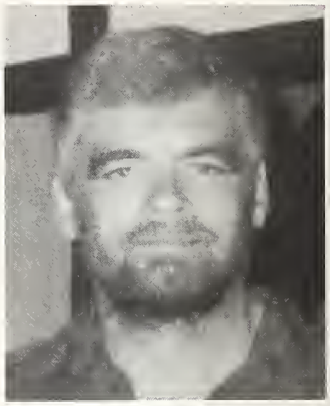

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Can you be lawful in times that are awful

Arthur P. Boers

Nonresistance does not mean standing by and letting evil continue. We need to act faithfully.

I was arrested on the day Ronald Reagan was re-elected to another term of unabashed militarism. I did not intend to be arrested, but it was appropriate nevertheless. Still hanging in my study are the plastic handcuffs the police used that day.

Four Mennonite teachers and eight high school students held a small, silent demonstration on a vacant lot near Great Lakes Naval Base, north of Chicago. Police ordered us out of town, threatening us with arrest for "demonstrating without a permit," a crime that takes at least 50 people to commit. Two teachers took the students away. But another teacher and I, objecting to this *illegal* harassment, stayed behind. Because I did not move, I was also charged with "resisting a peace officer." I spent a few hours in jail before being released on my own recognizance.

In the following months I attended several preliminary hearings, each occasion requiring me to take time off work. The prosecuting attorney did not always appear, so procedures were regularly postponed. Finally the "demonstrating without a permit" charge was dropped.

I was tried for the crime of "resisting a peace officer." The state attorney disqualified from the jury all who might be biased, including African-Americans, Jews, mothers, parents of teenagers and 20-something-year-olds, unemployed people. The "jury of my peers" consisted mostly of older middle-aged men. All were veterans: most served in World War II, one served in Korea, another in Vietnam. I was forbidden from associating with my wife and baby in the courtroom as this might prejudice the jury.

I was only allowed to discuss whether I obeyed the "peace officers." The circumstances, details and legality of my arrest could not be mentioned. (I was not tried for demonstrating without a permit.) There was no question of getting justice from those who illegally arrested me.

Police station: Found guilty, I was sentenced to 200 hours of community service and a year of probation. Twenty-five hours were to be served in the local police station, but the police refused to cooperate. Fines and court expenses added up to almost $2,000. In the same court, I saw others convicted of weapons offenses and driving while intoxicated. The highest fine any of those offenders received was 80 hours public service. Such are the priorities of our society.

I have not been arrested since then. But I do not regret any of my previous arrests. Each time I was convinced of God's call.

Some Mennonites are uncomfortable with protests, fearing a betrayal of our cherished nonresistance. Nonresistance stems from Matthew 5:38a: "Do not resist one who is evil." Yet Jesus resisted evil when he cleared the temple, healed demoniacs and argued with religious authorities. He showed that we may—and indeed should—

Proclaiming God's peacemaking stance: *Mennonites from the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Winnipeg protest at a nuclear missile site in North Dakota in 1990.*

resist evil, especially as it harms our neighbors. Matthew 5:38a means that we are not to resist evil *with evil*: the context of the passage makes clear that we are not to retaliate.

Early Anabaptists did not advocate passivity. Instead they used the term "Gewaltlosigkeit" for what we call nonresistance. The term meant refusing violent self-defense and refusing to join the military.

We all approve of some forms of resistance to evil. Most of us lock our houses. Many of us write letters to politicians or the newspaper about issues that concern us. Most parents refuse to let their children associate with bad influences. Our true concern is not whether or not to resist evil but how we may appropriately resist evil.

Our Anabaptist history is rooted in faithful law-breaking.

Mennonite hesitations here also reflect cultural inhibitions. I am often surprised at the lengths that Mennonites go to avoid dealing openly with conflict. Disagreements make us uneasy. But ignoring conflict usually makes it worse.

One evening outside my house I heard angry cursing and swearing. Going outside, I saw one man beating another. A neighbor and I separated the men. After some time of walking and talking, they cooled down and apologized to one another. My intervention was not *passively* nonresistant, but assertively and intrusively nonviolent. I did the right thing: Peace was made, and violence and bloodshed were averted.

Midwives: Valuing Paul's admonitions to respect the government (e.g. Romans 13), we are rightly reluctant to break laws. But we may not always obey all laws. Many biblical heroes broke laws in order to be faithful: the Egyptian midwives, Jeremiah, Daniel, Jesus, Peter, Stephen, Paul, John of Patmos. Millard C. Lind argues that it is incorrect to ask whether there is a biblical case for civil disobedience: "The problem is of the opposite sort, how the people of Yahweh can possibly relate in a positive way to the rebellious kingdoms of [humanity]."

Our Anabaptist history is rooted in faithful law-breaking. The first Anabaptist baptism, when Conrad Grebel baptized George Blaurock, was against the law. Wilhelm Reublin's refusal to baptize babies was law-breaking. Early Anabaptist evangelizing was law-breaking.

Duane Ruth Heffelbower, in *The Anabaptists Are Back!*, notes that "acceptance of the consequences of displeasing government authorities goes back to Anabaptist beginnings. Anabaptist believers were willing to accept punishment rather than give in

We are indicted by the violence of our governments.

Our true concern is not whether or not to resist evil but how we may appropriately resist evil.

to government demands that violated their understanding of God's will. There is nothing more political than refusing the demands of government authority." Early Anabaptism was not passive.

But we strayed from our heritage, making questionable compromises that are eminently lawful. In Russia, our spiritual ancestors agreed to restrict evangelism among neighbors, in order to keep the government happy. That was one way Mennonites became the "quiet in the land."

Eager to maintain tax-exempt status, we hesitate to take a stand on war taxes. But at what price? The little church I served found itself increasingly governed by the state, in order to maintain tax-exempt status. The government tries to control everything, from what we can name our congregation to how our leadership is organized.

As Ruth-Heffelbower notes, both nonviolence and nonresistance are confrontational. Both call people to change, to repent of violence, to do the things that make for peace. He notes that Jesus said, "Blessed are the peace*makers*," not just the "peace*lovers*."

My convictions about Christian nonviolence were sharpened by a visit to Grissom Air Force Base when I was in seminary. Grissom is part of the Strategic Air Command. SAC's symbol is a gauntlet holding a lightning bolt and an olive branch. Its motto: "Peace is our profession." One Sunday, I and other Christians attended Grissom's open house.

One pilot bragged about his jet, which consumes 500 gallons of kerosene per hour and can fire 4,200 rounds of shells per minute. It had several missiles slung underneath, including one that was guided by a Sony television. The jet cost $23 million; its gun was worth $800,000. One man grotesquely joked, "Imagine hunting squirrels with this."

I spoke to an F-4 pilot. His jet carried a heat-tracing Sidewinder missile. (Such missiles had been used to shoot down Libyan jets a few weeks earlier.) With an empty napalm pod, he calmly explained how napalm works. His gun could fire 6,000 rounds per minute, and his jet could carry nuclear missiles. "Nukes are no different than other bombs," he said, "they just require fewer sorties for the same aim."

"Expensive," I said.

"War's expensive," he said. "It's a game, and we all play it." One pilot named his bomber "Shake 'n Bake."

Machine guns: The open house had food, T-shirts, games, a circus and a concert. Was this a party? If so, what was being celebrated? There was a shooting gallery, guns to try and tanks to explore. Children even got to play with machine guns. Such are the priorities of our society.

I was shocked and particularly appalled by the Christians who supported the open house by singing in a concert and distributing patriotic tracts. Some months later I was in prayer when I specifically felt God call me to demonstrate at Grissom's next open house. I tested this with other Christians. We did witness to our faith at Grissom, and we were arrested (but not charged).

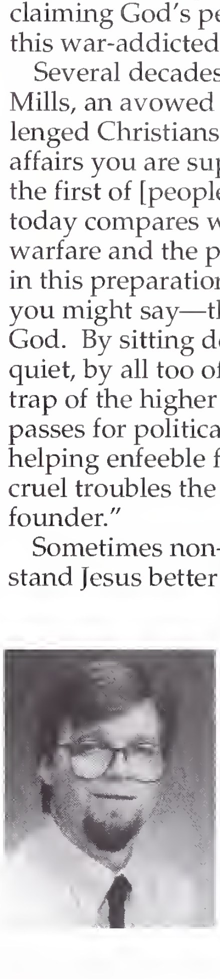
One year during Lent a group of us bore witness to the gospel near K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base (which houses B-52 bombers and nuclear weapons) in Michigan. The chaplains and officers on the base refused to talk with us, ignoring our letters and phone calls. For years people had been allowed to leaflet near the base, but we were not permitted to do so. We could only stand on a highway where traffic moved at 55 miles per hour. Personnel were forbidden to accept our literature. Those who did take leaflets were harassed. We concluded that we could not bear witness to our faith without breaking the law.

When I came within 50 yards of the base, I was arrested. While I was under arrest, many enlisted men encouraged me and asked me for my contraband leaflets.

World War II, the nuclear arms race and the war-tax issue all show that we cannot innocently separate ourselves from injustice and war-making. We are indicted by the violence of our governments. The Persian Gulf War taught me that we must be even more vocal and take greater risks in proclaiming God's peacemaking stance in this war-addicted world.

Several decades ago, C. Wright Mills, an avowed unbeliever, challenged Christians this way: "In moral affairs you are supposed to be among the first of [people]. No moral affair today compares with the morality of warfare and the preparation for it, for in this preparation [people] usurp—as you might say—the prerogatives of God. By sitting down and by keeping quiet, by all too often echoing the claptrap of the higher immorality that now passes for political leadership, you are helping enfeeble further in this time of cruel troubles the ideals of your founder."

Sometimes non-Christians understand Jesus better than we do.



Arthur P. Boers is pastor at Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Refusing to pay for war

Four Mennonites follow their consciences by telling the Canadian and U.S. governments they cannot pay for war with their taxes.

Larry Penner

When the Persian Gulf War broke out in 1991, Ed Olfert protested. "I needed to have a little bit of voice to say that this is stupid and has to end," he says. "This is my tax money at work, killing women and children."

Ed had considered tax resistance before. He decided to withold about 9 percent of his tax payment, a percentage that Conscience Canada, a tax resisters' group, suggests to represent the amount of taxes that goes to the military.

Along with witholding, Ed sent letters to government and Revenue Canada officials voicing his protest. But in the end the effort brought mostly frustration.

As a self-employed farmer, the amount he withheld was minimal, under $100. When Revenue Canada officials contacted him, they didn't know about his protest. "I wondered if the letters I sent even arrived," Ed says.

At his church, Superb Mennonite Church in Kerrobert, Sask., Ed found little sympathy. "There was a fear of what I was doing," he says. "There was a drawing away, as if people wondered, 'Is this what the Mennonite church is moving toward, that we all have to do this?'"

Actually, Mennonite tax resisters are few and scattered. More support legislative change that would allow people of conscience to designate their tax dollars for nonmilitary ends. Such legislation has been proposed in both Canada and the United States.

> "There was a fear of what I was doing."
>
> *Ed Olfert*

Those who do resist paying taxes find the need to resist more imperative as technology moves warfare farther from conscription and closer to the pocketbook. While the draft in the United States has remained inactive since 1972, 28 percent of the 1993 federal budget went to current military efforts and another 18.7 percent to payments on past military efforts, according to the Friends Committee on National Legislation. And although Canada has not conscripted its citizens since World War II, Conscience Canada reports that $12 billion, or 7.5 percent of the federal budget, went to military spending in fiscal year 1993. The Persian Gulf War proved that with modern technology, full-scale war can be fought without conscription, but not without dollars.

Hypocritical: For resister Menno Klassen of Winnipeg, resisting warfare through his taxes has become more imperative as he has grown older. Excused from war as a conscientious objector to World War II, Menno says it would be hypocritical now to pay to send someone in his place. "Our constitution guarantees freedom of conscience, but if we're not allowed to exercise our conscience, it doesn't mean much," he says.

> "Our constitution guarantees freedom of conscience, but if we're not allowed to exercise our conscience, it doesn't mean much."
>
> *Menno Klassen*

Like Ed, Menno has received mixed reactions from his congregation, Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship in Winnipeg. "I must admit I don't receive much support from the church, even though my church is one of the more tolerant in Winnipeg," he says. "People [in the church] are busy with family and inward looking. It's a family affair."

In Ontario, Jane Pritchard has found some support. Like Ed, her conscience condemned the Gulf War, "the first war fought by my country since I became politically aware."

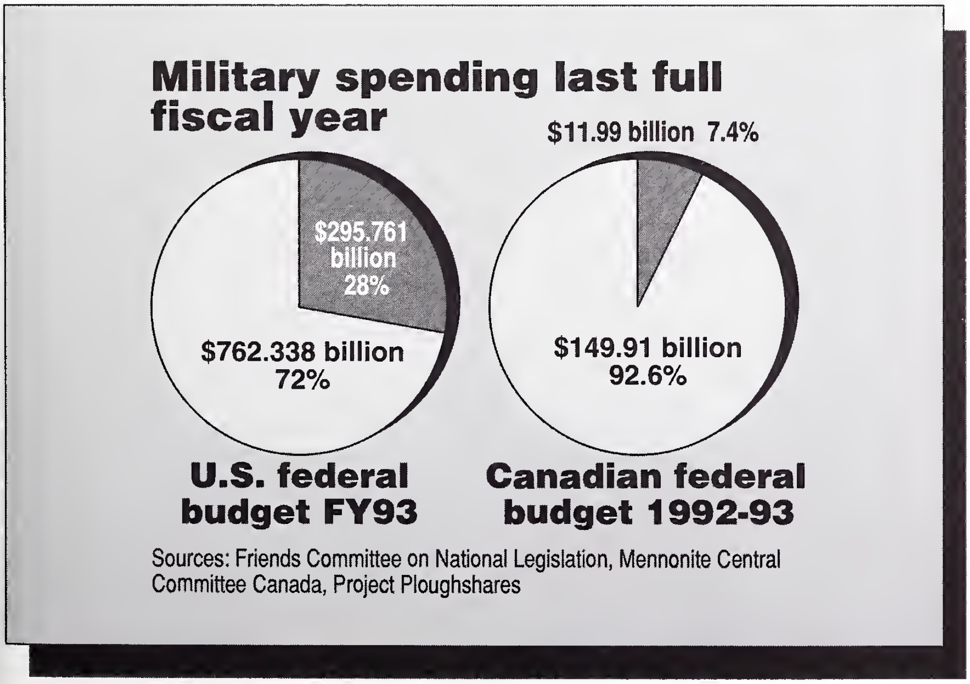
A physician, Jane faced a higher tax payment. She withheld just over $1,000. For her the act was a liberation. "Once I'd done it I didn't see how I could convince myself to pay before." Jane has found support for her decision in her Bible study group at Toronto United Mennonite Church.

When Revenue Canada called Jane in, she expected the worst. She was not disappointed. She was shown into a stark room with nothing but two chairs, a desk, a light and a computer terminal. "It was like something out of [the book] *1984*," she says. The Revenue Canada representative kept saying she owed this portion of her taxes. He didn't ask why she didn't pay but said Revenue Canada had to do something. He did not say what.

Sympathy: At some point partway through the interview, Jane realized her interviewer was more nervous than she was. When he did not respond to her questions of what Revenue Canada would do, she suggested possibilities. "Garnishee my wages?" He nodded yes. "From where?" He did not know. "Raid my bank account?" Again he nodded. She left feeling sympathy for her inquisitor, a sympathetic young man caught in a system.

> "Once I'd done it I didn't see how I could convince myself to pay before."
>
> *Jane Pritchard*

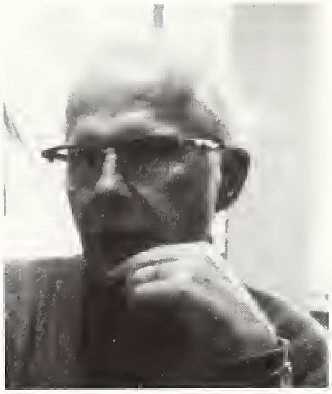
Military spending last full fiscal year



Sources: Friends Committee on National Legislation, Mennonite Central Committee Canada, Project Ploughshares

Don Kaufman of Newton, Kan., knows that many Internal Revenue Service officers are sympathetic people caught in a system. He has resisted military tax for 36 years. He recalls one IRS representative who said he hoped the government would make it possible for tax resisters to resist without breaking the law.

Partly because IRS officials are bound by regulations, Don's protest has shifted its emphasis over the years. "Initially I wrote more to the IRS, now I write more to Congress. The IRS is just carrying out Congress' orders," Don says. "If there were a provision for conscience in giving money for war



> "If there were a provision for conscience in giving money for war as there is in giving body to war, tax resisters wouldn't have to feel guilty for following their conscience."
>
> *Don Kaufman*

as there is in giving body to war, tax resisters wouldn't have to feel guilty for following their conscience."

In his many years of resistance, Don has seen interest in tax resistance wax and wane. But, he says, it has never died out. The history of war tax resistance in North America dates to the first settlers from Europe, many of whom left their home country in part to avoid paying taxes for war. But when the personal income tax was introduced in both the United States and Canada, funds raised went to pay for war.

Don believes a change will come. "It may be like women's suffrage, it may take 60 to 80 years before there is a change, but if people keep working and don't give up too easily, there will be a change," he says.

Until the law changes, Don will continue to resist. "It's enough of a threat to who I am as a person that I don't want to give it up. If I quit, I become schizophrenic at that point—I'm not being honest with who I am. I want my life to be integrated."

Larry Penner is assistant editor of The Mennonite.

Waiting for the tax collector

Pat and Earl Hostetter Martin have been resisting taxes since they returned from Mennonite Central Committee work in Vietnam in 1969. As students in Palo Alto, Calif., they began by withholding 10 percent of their telephone tax, a sum that totaled about $10 after three years.

For this, Internal Revenue Service representatives drove down from San Francisco twice and questioned their landlord while Pat and Earl were at work. Then they received a notice threatening a lien on their property and ordering an appearance at the IRS office. But before the appearance, the IRS found the Martins' bank account and took the money.

'Honest to our conscience': *Earl and Pat Hostetter Martin with their son Hans*

In 1984 the Martins went to Akron, Pa., to serve as co-secretaries for East Asia for MCC. They withheld about 30 percent of their taxes, a figure representing the amount of tax money going for current military expenditures. "After being in Vietnam and having seen a lot of friends who had suffered because of U.S. weapons, we decided we couldn't pay," Pat says.

The couple has resisted paying taxes ever since.

At first the IRS froze their personal checking account for a couple of weeks to collect. Pat called it an odd blessing. "You get caught with checks out and you have to go back to stores and explain. But that also gave us an opportunity to explain why we are tax resisters."

Four years ago the couple began moving its bank account frequently to keep the IRS from finding the money. They now owe between $2,000 and $3,000.

When the IRS tried to garnishee the couple's wages at MCC, MCC's response was to ask the IRS to reconsider, to try to find the money some other way.

MCC, like most Mennonite organizations, does withhold income tax from employees' paychecks for the government. The General Conference Mennonite Church is the only major Mennonite organization that will grant employees' requests to *not* have federal taxes withheld from their paychecks so that employees may resist taxes.

Last year the Martins were in Vietnam from January through July. While they were gone the IRS attached a lien to all their property: house, car, real estate. Anything they own could now be sold to pay the debt.

The couple is part of a Lancaster group of resisters called "Taxes for Life." The group meets monthly to support each other. "Anyone who chooses tax resistance should have a support group because it can be scary," says Pat. "We agree to stand behind each other and keep ourselves honest to our conscience."

Larry Penner

Letters

Counselors' abuse of parents

There have been conferences, talk and written material in the last year or two about child abuse. One group that is caught in this situation that has not been heard from are the parents of these grown children.

When we were raising our children in the '40s, '50s and into the '60s, the emphasis, as a way of discipline, was placed on "spare the rod and spoil the child," based on Proverbs 13:24 and Proverbs 19:18. In addition to that, if you were a minister you were told that to be a good leader in the church you were to have your children "in subjection," based on 1 Timothy 3:4 (KJV). We certainly didn't want our children labeled "those unruly PKs."

There are a lot of parents who are being accused of child abuse who were using the method of discipline that we were taught to use. In some cases we were probably too harsh, but we loved, and still do love, our children and wanted them to grow up to be well-respected and responsible people. For the most part they did turn out that way. But along the way, after they were grown and in their 30s and 40s, they had some problems, as all people have in life, and some of them went to counselors. There are good and some excellent counselors. But there are some who are not so good. There are some counselors who tell these grown children that the reason for their problems is "suppressed memories of abuse." The parents are blamed for all the children's (now adults in their 40s) problems. And so the family is torn apart. The parents are not consulted at all, or if they are, they are just put down and not really listened to. I know there is and has been child abuse. When it occurs it is a terrible sin and needs to be dealt with. But it is not an unforgivable sin.

These grown children are in turn abusing their aging parents. They do not enter into special occasions of celebration with the family. There are no phone calls, letters, birthday cards or any communication. We are denied the privilege of knowing our grandchildren or watching them grow up.

When is the church going to start listening to the parents, guilty or not, and start working for forgiveness and reconciliation? I know one daughter who told her mother, "I forgave you long ago," but then with hatred and bitterness in her voice accused her parents of things that never happened.

I am hoping and praying that the church will start working with, and not against, families that have been torn apart by people who claim to be working for the betterment of families. There is a great need for this. There needs to be a lot of work toward forgiveness, reconciliation and restoration. *Name withheld by request*

Open to God's Spirit

We always enjoy every issue of *The Mennonite*. The Feb. 8 issue was especially good, with the excellent articles on university students in our churches. Dorothy Nickel Friesen (page 3) did a superb job of sharing her observations, which are excellent ideas for all of our congregations to use as they relate to and include the young adults in our midst. Heidi Regier Kreider's article (page 6), which told how Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Gainesville, Fla., includes students in every level of worship and congregational life, was thought provoking and challenging. Steve Ratzlaff (page 8) reminded us that it is those who come, not the number who come, that is important in our ministry to not only students but to all people.

Thanks to Ashish Chrispal (page 10) for reminding each of us and our churches what it means to follow "the way of the cross." Truly we all need to work at following God's way, which is the way of the cross, instead of the

From our leaders

Darrell Fast

Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable ... " (1 Peter 1:3-4).

The Christian church is always one generation from extinction. That statement makes me wince, not because it isn't true but because it is not the whole truth. Although our faith is a matter of personal choice, it is also an inheritance. By definition an inheritance is something received from past generations. This bringing together of choice and inheritance is prominent in the New Testament epistles (for example, in Colossians 1:11-12 and Ephesians 1:11-14, along with the quotation from 1 Peter above). The new birth and our inheritance are part of the same gospel.

During the years of my ministry I have come to appreciate more and more the faith heritage that is ours as Mennonite Christians. I grew up in a community that was not of one mind on this question. To this day I feel the scars of that division in my heart and soul. Generally I would say that our extended family took its place with those in our community who opted for the new birth (in other words a one-generation emphasis) at the expense of inheritance. The Mennonite faith heritage was seen as extra baggage rather than something to be claimed and cared for. How I crossed over from one side to the other is a much longer story than I care to tell here. But prominent in that crossover were the recovery of an Anabaptist vision and the Mennonite tradition of four-part congregational singing.

This inheritance has given me a faith to claim as my own as well as a faith to live by and a faith to sing.

Truly I can say with the psalmist, "The lines fall for me in pleasant places, indeed I am well content with my inheritance" (Psalm 16:6).

Darrell Fast is moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church and pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

world's way, which is the way of violence and power.

We cannot dispute John Esau's article (page 9) on "Crisis in the Mennonite church." John does an accurate job of describing the situation. Thanks for helping us look at ourselves and where we are in a realistic way. There is much hope for our congregations because Christ is on our side, and God is not done with us if we will be faithful and obedient. Our prayer is that we all will be open to God's Spirit as it continues to lead us in God's way.

Thanks for a job well done. Keep up the good work of keeping us informed, encouraged, challenged and prodded to do our Lord's bidding. *Myron and Phyllis Schultz, Bloomfield, Mont.*

AIDS and morality

Reading the Jan. 25 issue of *The Mennonite*, I was inspired by the call to compassion in responding to people with AIDS. This was clearly evident in all the articles, whether written from a North American or overseas perspective. Surely this is Christ's way.

Yet I found it curious that only those articles written from an overseas context talked of moral teaching as being an important part of a compassionate response. Why is this? Are we as North American Mennonites uncomfortable upholding a biblical morality for friends, neighbors, adolescents and most significantly ourselves? Do we consider abstaining from sex until marriage and monogamous relationships to be irrelevant and even foolish in light of today's sexual mores? Do we think the teaching of morality to be judgmental and not compassionate?

Kathleen Rempel Boschman (page 6) and Elizabeth Brandt (page 9) both viewed the teaching of abstinence from premarital and extramarital sex as an important part of a compassionate response to the AIDS epidemic in Africa. We in North America would do well to listen to their perspective. *Terry Zimmerly, Regina, Sask.*

Indifference to confession

It finally arrived. I was glad to order the Confession of Faith in its entirety. I ordered 10 copies for our church.

First, I talked with the education committee. My idea of a Sunday school class met with frowns. How about an evening discussion group? Not if non-Mennonites would be in our evening service. "What is there to discuss?" said one member. "We need to lead people to the Lord."

I tried the deacons. One said he would like to look it over; another took it because I reminded him that his wife had said it might be interesting. I settled on an open discussion at my home of part of the confession. We would offer coffee and cookies. We announced this and told people they could pick up copies from the church office prior to the discussion evening.

No one asked for a copy. The first deacon said he read the first page and got no further; the second returned his copy with a shrug; the rest of the deacons had no comment. On the designated evening the pastor's family played Bible trivia and Pit.

I suspect this reaction is not all that rare. First of all, Mennonites are nondoctrinal. Getting a new confession is like replacing your washboard—why replace it since we don't use the old one? Second, learning that some people want a different confession is like hearing from your insurance agent that he "needs" to talk to you about your coverage. Either the company is withdrawing coverage of something or will raise your premium. But what if you're happy with present coverage? Maybe we're happy with our current confessions (if we could just locate them). *Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

From our mission workers

Moscow, Russia—We have been surprised at how difficult life is for so many people here in Russia. With the economy in a tailspin, many cannot afford medication, much less necessary medical care for things like diabetes and high blood pressure. People are left to fend for themselves. Teachers and doctors often are not paid and thus despair that their education and work is for naught. In the midst of all this we are amazed by the hopefulness of many of the Christians with whom we work. Often under trying conditions, with inadequate salaries and with cubbyholes for offices, these people struggle to do good, witness to the light, educate and nurture faith in the Living God. These people inspire us, and their witness spurs us on to work diligently at the tasks we have before us. *Janet Bergen*

Ponta Grossa, Brazil—In February we [were to] open a business/commercial training school at our church. This is to be an evening school, with courses in typing, office clerk and accounting clerk. We are working together with the National Training Institute. We will use their teaching plans and course materials. The final certification will come from the National Training Institute. Our part is to provide the teacher and location. This is a good opportunity for serving the young people of our community with practical training for future jobs; the courses are being offered at a low price to encourage those who do not otherwise have the finances to study elsewhere.

Lucila, one of the church members, will be the teacher; she is a recent university graduate in accounting. So far there are 18 students enrolled for the courses. The church has purchased six typewriters; a man from the church has made nice tables for the typewriters, and we also purchased 23 used school desks for the office clerk and accounting courses. Pray that things will run smoothly in this new venture, and the young students may also be drawn to the Lord through their training at the church.

In January we have planned for our first vacation Bible school. We are looking forward to this and pray that many children from the neighborhood will come. We are planning for a five-day Bible school, and it should be something new for them, as we are the only evangelical church in our area.

Our region of Mennonite churches has purchased about 25 acres of land in a beautiful setting for a church campground. A gate has been put up, and soon a fence will be put up. We have contracted a surveyor to study the land and prepare a topological map so we will be able to make plans for the layout of the buildings. We and two other couples are in charge of all the planning for the new campground, which will keep us busy. *Nilson and Mary Jane Assis (written in December)*

A way home

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Spring cleaning and the Spirit

For our children life at home has cosmic dimensions.

Sara Wenger Shenk

Sara Wenger Shenk is author of Coming Home *(Good Books, 1992) and lives in Harrisonburg, Va.*

Spring brings a fresh stirring in the inner sanctum. The balmy breezes waft through the window a longing for renewal. The birds' singing, silent for so many frozen days, blesses us on awakening with a newborn hope that all shall be well.

The ever-shifting seasons keep us from becoming too set in our stuffy ways. Like a cosmic comedian they tease and tantalize us outdoors only to come crashing down and chase us in again.

It's deemed sophisticated to make disparaging comments of those who talk about the weather. And yet why are we so put off? The weather, after all, is one huge factor in our over-controlled lives that is out of our control. Its surprises keep even the dullest of us on our toes when we might otherwise succumb to total lethargy (or arrogance). And even more so, the weather teaches us about God.

As has been known and acknowledged since the beginning of time, the weather is not merely a variety of tricks with water, sun and wind. It has spiritual dimensions. The rainbow is more than the light spectrum broken down into vivid streamers of color. It is a sign of covenant. The clear air of a summer night is more than the absence of stormy conditions. It is the curtain thrown back on the heavens declaring the glory of God.

I'm intrigued over and over again with the cosmic dimensions of life at home for our children: the early, tender cradling and reliable response to their cries that shapes their most fundamental ability to trust; their sense of what mother means and what father means and how that forms their first inklings of God; their sense of what is fair and how to respond to life when it isn't fair; their early intimations of the meaning of covenanted love, a love that is everlasting no matter what.

Those are some familiar spiritual meanings to be drawn from everyday life. But what about spring cleaning? What on earth does spring cleaning have to do with anything?

Sacramental ritual: A great deal, suggests Walter Wangerin in his most recent book, *Little Lamb, Who Made Thee?*, a perfectly lovely book about children and parents. The coming of spring, with the earth "shrugging toward rebirth," reminds him of his mother and her spring cleaning. She was a priest, he writes, and this was her sacramental ritual.

"My mother kept cleaning, kept reclaiming territory by the act of cleaning it, kept redeeming her children therein." His mother's feats persuaded Wangerin that "everything old and fusty could be eliminated … or better yet, the old itself could be the new again." Because of her priestly toil to make "my infant world a clean, well-lighted place," he writes, "now … in spite of wretched evidence to the contrary, I continue to trust in the ultimate purity of God's universe. … Now therefore, I trust renewal. Resurrection. Easter.

"Never, never," he writes, "should children take so cosmic a gift for granted."

First, within the smallness of our childhood homes, we learn our most profound and indelible ways of seeing and interpreting the then-known world—either with gladness or with cringing fear. These ways of seeing and being we then take with us into the wider world. Whether spring-cleaning rituals or bedtime prayers or gardening or whatever patterns good or ill—these become the fertile soil out of which sprout visions luminous with goodness or shuttered, darkened dreams.

I'm impressed all over again with the spiritual ramifications of ordinary rhythms and daily rites. Truly all of life is the raw stuff for telling forth God's goodness. As I've written elsewhere, "Our favorite distinctions between sacred and secular are generally unhelpful. We cannot divide the spiritual from the practical. We are amphibious beings, creatures of spirit and of sense. It is through all the circumstances, inward and outward, that we are fed supernatural food."

And in springtime, the elixir is especially rich and invigorating.

Within the smallness of our childhood homes, we learn our most profound and indelible ways of seeing and interpreting the then-known world—either with gladness or with cringing fear.

Edward Wallowitch

Does prayer make any difference?

Jesus taught that God does respond to prayer.

Levi Keidel

Those at one extreme say, "God is sovereign, the same yesterday, today and forever. Prayer doesn't change anything about God. It only changes those of us who pray. What's going to happen will happen."

If this is true, why pray?

Those at the other extreme say, "Jesus taught that if we but believe, all things we ask for will be granted us (Mark 11:22-24). I'm going to get myself a Lexus; I'll no longer get sick; every time I go fishing, I'll have good luck."

God will not submit to our manipulation. God is not a cosmic bellhop. This extreme is equally untenable. The truth must lie somewhere between the two.

Human prayer *does* play a direct role in changing things. The Bible says that events in the Hebrew Scriptures were written as examples for our instruction (1 Corinthians 10:11). A miracle was performed before Pharaoh only when Aaron cast his staff onto the ground (Exodus 7:10). The waters of the Red Sea divided only when Moses raised his hand over them (Exodus 14:21). Israel defeated the Amalekites only when Moses held high his staff, his arms supported by Aaron and Hur (Exodus 17:9-13). Because of Abraham's intercession, God reduced his conditions for sparing Sodom five successive times (Genesis 18). Because Daniel fasted and prayed for three weeks, an angel was sent from God, surmounted obstacles en route and delivered to Daniel the message he needed (Daniel 10).

The Hebrew Scriptures record at numerous places that "God repented." What does this mean if not that God changed, not in essence but in attitude?

If prayer doesn't change anything, why did Jesus say, "Ask, and you shall receive"? Jesus said, "Pray the Lord of the harvest that he send out workers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:38). Is it not implied that if we do not pray, workers will not be sent?

The empty-handed host got bread for his midnight visitor because the visitor was importunate (Luke 11). The ungodly judge gave the widow justice against her adversary because of her persistence (Luke 18). Jesus linked to the end of this parable a question: "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (verse 8). Does this not mean that human persistence in prayer is commendable, even a sign of faith?

Why did Jesus teach us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done," if in fact our praying would change nothing about the kingdom's coming?

Upon his departure from earth, why did Jesus plead long with the Father for his disciples and the church if he knew that in reality his prayers would in no way affect the Father's attitude toward either of them (John 17)?

In Gethsemane, why did Jesus agonize in prayer to the point of sweating blood, asking that the cup of self-sacrifice be removed from him, if in fact no other option were open to him?

God has designed that his work on earth be done through people. Similarly, God has designed that human prayer be an essential ingredient in accomplishing God's purposes on earth. Our praying has a great impact on our sick world. It decides the outcome of spiritual battles. It determines whether people will or will not be in the kingdom of God.

"Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests" (Ephesians 6:18). What things have happened because we prayed? What things have failed to happen because we failed to pray?

Levi Keidel and Eudene, his wife, are editors of the Abraham and Sarah Prayerletter, *published by the Commission on Home Ministries to nurture prayer for new churches in the General Conference and new witness in North America. The Keidels live in Fort Wayne, Ind.*

Update: Retirement funds for charity in Canada

One area where Mennonites have acquired a buildup of financial resources is in retirement plans, including Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSP), Registered Retirement Income Funds and company pension plans.

All retirement plans offer the opportunity to name a beneficiary, including a charity. However, in doing so it is not possible to avoid taxation of the funds transferred on death to the charity. The estate is taxable on any amounts received by the charity. The charity may issue a tax receipt to the estate for an amount it receives in this way.

Dilemmas may result from designating a charity to receive funds from a retirement plan. First, the tax receipt issued by the charity can only be used in the year of death and carried back one year prior to death. Thus a gift made in this way is not eligible for the usual five-year carry-forward and diminishes the tax savings. A withdrawal and subsequent gift during one's lifetime is likely more beneficial.

Second, when making a gift directly from a retirement plan, a significant portion of one's estate may create a tax liability that the estate may have difficulty paying for. The tax rate can be as high as 50 to 55 percent, leaving the estate with a large tax bill.

Third, all retirement plans have a specific time when they mature. Pension plans typically end in the year an individual reaches age 65. An RRSP must be converted to a retirement benefit payment plan. If a specific retirement savings plan is used as a gift, that gift will end when the plan is collapsed or matured. Furthermore, a retirement benefit payment plan diminishes over time.

Using retirement funds at death for giving is not the most ideal approach, but systematic giving during one's lifetime can mean more giving potential from retirement funds. *Edgar Rempel, manager of Mennonite Foundation of Canada*

General Board hedges on integration

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church, meeting here at Council of Commissions March 11-15, unanimously "received" the recommendations from the Integration Exploration Committee, which state "that the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) become one denomination by the year 2003." (For more on the recommendation, see *The Mennonite*, March 22, page 13.)

However, the General Board accepted the recommendations on the condition that more detail be added about the possible structure of an integrated denomination.

Jim Harder, North Newton, Kan., proposed an amendment that asked "that more detail be added at the conceptual level ... prior to the presentation of a final integration proposal to GC and MC delegate bodies."

In calling for more detail, Harder asked, "Do we avoid the difficulty [of adding detail] prior to a vote or do we face it?"

"I've been surprised at what I've heard during these meetings," said James Wenger, Fresno, Calif. "There seems to be much more reservation than earlier."

Harder said his intent was "not anti-integration but for better integration."

In an earlier discussion, some members expressed their reservations about the possibility of integration with the Mennonite Church.

Marian Franz, Washington, described a feeling that "the train is already moving. GCs have to run to get on board."

In the process, she said, "something happens to our sense of identity. We mustn't be stepped on. Merger is not going to feel good if that is what happens." *Carla Reimer and Dave Linscheid*

Commissions reassess priorities

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The General Board (GB) of the General Conference Mennonite Church formulated an initial list of future priorities and took action on a proposal that the General Conference and the Mennonite Church integrate by 2003 (see article, this page) at the annual Council of Commissions here March 11-15.

The focus on the future comes at a time when the General Conference is faced with a continuing decline in income—the denomination received 92.9 percent of its 1993 budget.

"It is not a time for business as usual," said conference moderator Darrell Fast, Newton, Kan. "We need to make significant adjustments."

The approximately 200 staff and board or commission members had a chance to voice what they saw as priorities when they met in small groups during the March 14 plenary session. The executive committee then presented a summary of the responses, which included mission and evangelism, leadership concerns, congregational issues, relationships within and outside the organization, structural changes and communication.

'Not a time for business as usual.'
Fast

Priorities: After the plenary session, the board met in a closed session to do its own prioritizing. After seven hours board members agreed on an initial list of priorities, which included nurturing pastoral and lay leadership, developing Anabaptist curriculum, providing resources to congregations, spreading the Good News at home and abroad, providing opportunities for service, teaching stewardship and

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Alberta conference supports Asian churches / p. 16

New overseas mission executive named / p. 17

Bethel College president to step down / p. 17

Coaldale (Alta.) Mennonite Church celebrated 65 years at an anniversary celebration Oct. 16-17, 1993. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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The Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) board of directors passed a preliminary budget increase of 7.5 percent at meetings at the college March 3-5. The college reports enrollment for this spring at 621, up from 613 in 1993 and 587 in 1992.

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Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church received 109.7 percent of its $185,000 budget in 1993. The group adopted a $185,000 budget for 1994 at a March 12 meeting here during Council of Commissions.

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A Ministry of Reconciliation conference slated for June 9-11 at Eastern College, St. Davids, Pa., will feature speaker Edwin Friedman, author of *Generation to Generation*. Other speakers include Myron Augsburger, Gretchen Gaebelein Hull, Ron Sider and Nadine Smith-Bulford. Workshops will adress clergy sexual misconduct, racial and ethnic conflict, and family systems theory and church conflict. Contact Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, 528 E. Madison, Lombard, IL 60148, (708) 627-5310. The center also has several conflict mediation seminars scheduled throughout the year, including a June workshop for educators.

Global Harvest Ministries is calling for a world day of prayer June 25. The group estimates that 160 million people, at least 30 percent of the world's committed Christians, will participate in prayer for world evangelization that day.

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Jake Rempel, Blumenort, Man., was chosen as citizen of the year by the Altona and District Chamber of Commerce. Rempel, a deacon in the Blumenort Mennonite Church, has devoted countless hours to caring for handicapped residents of the St. Amant Centre in Winnipeg and in Altona. He works with Open Circle, befriending prison inmates, and organizes outings for local seniors. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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Dr. Herman Solomon of the Dermatology Clinic, P.A., in Wichita, Kan., believes the skin desease ichthyosis may be uncommonly common among Mennonites. He believes the recessive lamellar ichthyosis gene may be more likely to surface in the Mennonite population and wishes to plan a study to identify the gene that carries the disease. People with the disease or with family members who have the disease can contact Dr. Solomon at 835 N. Hillside, Wichita, KS 67214. He requests that photographs accompany correspondence.

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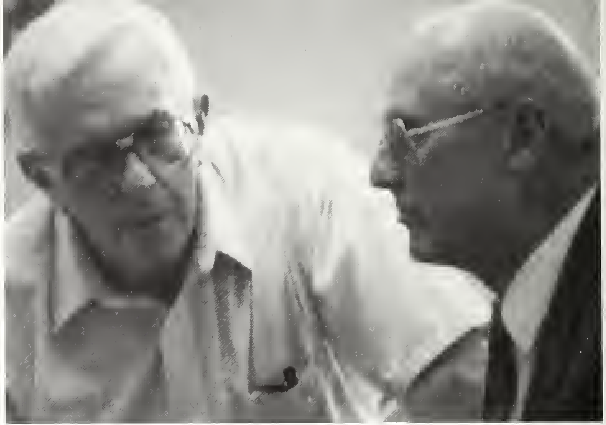
With the merger and redivision of the Pacific District Conference, Southwest Mennonite Conference and the Pacific Coast Mennonite Conference, Mennonite Men is already feeling the effects of integration. MM is a part of the General Conference Mennonite Church. The Mennonite Church does not have a men's organization. James Gingerich, a member of the Integration Exploration Committee, assured MM that any integrated Mennonite structures will have a place for auxiliary organizations such as MM.


Dave Linscheid

Commended: *Division of General Services board member Allen Yoder (right) and the rest of the DGS board commended Frank Keller (left) and planned giving director Gary Franz for soliciting donations from 657 people in 1993.*

communicating.

A task force comprised of GB members will present specific proposals pertaining to future programs, structures and budgets in light of these priorities to the board in August. The proposals could take effect in 1996.

In other business, the GB

- conducted an in-depth review of the Commission on Education,
- approved a '94 General Conference income budget of $4,680,807, which is 5.87 percent below the 1993 budget;
- approved a preliminary income budget for 1995 of $4,446,767, which is 5 percent below that adopted for 1994;
- approved a 0 percent salary increase for staff for 1994. *Dave Linscheid*

Division of General Services

The Division of General Services (DGS) reviewed last year's income and considered a new way to project future budgets, among other business.

When reviewing the 1993 income budget, the board members noted that only 92.9 percent of the projected income had been attained. However, they commended staff for recognizing a downward trend mid-year and curtailing expenses; the commissions underspent their budgets by 5 to 10 percent.

To predict income better for 1994 and beyond, DGS decided to anticipate the contribution and non-contribution portions of income separately. With this new formula in mind, DGS sent to the General Board budget proposals for 1994 and 1995 that each reflected a 5 percent cut, and proposed a 0 percent salary increase for staff.

DGS reviewed the work of planned giving director Gary Franz and stewardship director Frank Keller. Franz and Keller solicited donations from 657 people in 1993. The board commended the two for increasing contacts with individuals.

However, DGS also noted the importance of giving from churches. "We also want strong congregational giving," Bev Suderman-Gladwell, Port Rowan, Ont., reminded those present. *Dave Linscheid*

Commission on Home Ministries

Program cutbacks dominated the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) discussion. The commission decided to eliminate Robert Hull's three-quarter-time position of secretary for peace and justice, effective Feb. 1, 1995. Peace and justice tasks will be reassigned to other staff.

The binational CHM voted to restructure its staff, effective February 1995, to focus on the following three areas: resourcing congregations for witness, facilitating witness beyond the local congregation and channeling personnel for witness.

CHM U.S. discussed its decision made in fall 1993 to cut back support to the Mennonite Indian Leaders' Council. A 10-year schedule outlining the cutbacks would reduce the total MILC allocation from $126,466 in 1994 to $75,466 in 2004.

The cutback schedule designated several specifics: subsidies to existing congregations and pastors would reach zero by 1999, and subsidies to Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., would fall to zero by 2004. These cuts would be partially replaced with funding for leader training and church planting under MILC and an endowment fund for Hopi Mission School.

Distress: Indian leaders, particularly those from Oklahoma, expressed distress at the decision. While MILC representatives were willing to accept the overall budget cut, they asked to receive the total MILC budget as a lump sum, which they could then use as they saw fit.

CHM U.S. postponed deciding how to process MILC's response to the planned cutbacks until its fall meeting.

CHM also

- voted to join the Andrew Center, an Anabaptist resource center for evangelism and church growth initiated by the Church of the Brethren, on a one-year trial basis for a cost of $5,000;

- endorsed a proposal for a "Jubilee Year for Nuclear Weapons" in 1995;
- voted to use CHM reserves as backup funds to cover uncollected student loans (The loans went to 16 students who were ineligible for federal aid because they refused to register for the draft. Two have not yet responded to CHM's letters asking for payment);
- acted to broaden the work of Hugh and Janet Sprunger, coordinators for Chinese Ministries, to include other Asian groups. *Larry Penner*

Commission on Education

The Commission on Education (COE) encountered good news and bad news. Balancing the excitement of hearing about, seeing and touching the new *Jubilee* curriculum for the first time was the somber discussion about cooperation with Mennonite Church publishers and the financial situation of Faith & Life Press (FLP).

Jubilee: God's Good News, the new children's curriculum, got good reviews from congregations that tested it, said Rosella Wiens Regier, executive director of the project. *I Am Somebody God Loves*, a vacation Bible school program, also got good reviews.

Some of FLP's educational resources are published jointly with the Mennonite Church. The commission took time in a closed session to discuss cooperative publishing and the possibility of integration with the Mennonite Church.

Bailed out: Staff referred to one difficulty of cooperative publishing during a discussion of youth-oriented materials. They had learned from a report in the Feb. 22 issue of *Gospel Herald* that Mennonite Publishing House, FLP's publishing partner in youth materials, had decided it "must 'simplify and restructure' its products for the youth market."

"We don't know if our partners have bailed out or not," said Mark Regier, FLP marketing director.

Youth material includes *Foundation Series Youth Bible Studies* and *Youth Electives*, Youth Resources, *YouthGuide*, Venture Clubs and *With*. If forced to prioritize these, COE chair Erick Sawatzky said, "curriculum is more at the heart of what we do."

Another cause for concern was the financial report for FLP. A year ago COE restructured and added staff to its publishing arm. While it expected to lose money the first few years, the $252,000 shortfall for fiscal 1993 was sobering.

"We're counting on *Jubilee* to help us out this fall," said Dick Rempel, director of products and finance.

In discussing FLP's situation, COE felt hampered by incomplete financial information. In the end, commission members asked that staff do additional work and that by April 30 there be a budget with a projected deficit of no more than $100,000, not including inventory write-offs.

Given the dwindling budgets, COE said farewell to Andy Stoner, director of family life ministry, whose position ended Jan. 31.

COE also decided to become involved with the Long-Term Stewardship Cultivation Project, a joint effort of several Mennonite agencies. *Gordon Houser*

Commission on Overseas Mission

In addition to hearing reports about mission work in 19 countries, the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) discussed how it could be in better touch with the constituency and announced that Glendon Klaassen (see page 17) would be the new executive secretary effective June 1.

COM, together with other commissions, has seen a continual drop in income over the last number of years. Its 1994 expenditure budget is $228,440 less than the 1993 expenditure budget. As a result, the number of overseas workers continues to decline: By the end of 1994, COM will support 80 mission workers, compared with 90 at the end of 1993.

The commission also acted to cut the equivalent of one half-time staff position beginning June 1 by changing a number of job descriptions. Personnel secretary Peter Rempel will add one-quarter time to his half-time position to work as the COM liaison with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, effective June 1.

In other action, COM

- announced the appointment of Todd and Jeannette Hanson to a four-year term in China and Erwin and Angela Rempel to an initial three-year term in Botswana;
- agreed that if the Conference of Mennonites in Canada moves ahead with plans for a church-planting ministry in eastern Germany that COM then match its financial input

A new Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia project combines job creation and care for the environment. The $70,000 Eco Tree project will hire eight unemployed people to plant 100,000 seedlings in B.C.'s lower mainland. TreePlan Canada and Canada Employment are funding the project with MCC.

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Seed Winnipeg has helped an ex-biker start up a coffin business. Seed Winnipeg is a Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba-sponsored project to loan money to low-income residents who want to start their own business. The group took Carman Settee's Harley-Davidson motorcycle as collateral on a loan to start up First Nations Caskets, a company that makes coffin liners that add cultural significance to aboriginal funerals. The company is one of 16 that Seed Winnipeg has helped in its first year of operation.

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Jürg Rindlisbacher, editor of the Swiss Mennonite weekly paper *Perspektive*, decided his conscience would no longer permit him to serve in the military after 15 years of obeying his call to military service. Last October, when summoned for his last fortnight of service in the Swiss Army, Rindlisbacher wrote a letter to his commanding officer outlining how his Christian beliefs prohibited his further military service. On Jan. 18 the Swiss government summoned Rindlisbacher to appear before a magistrate. Sentencing, however, will likely not happen until some new legislation that will send conscientious objectors to work camps rather than to prison is implemented.

Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio, will celebrate its 90th anniversary May 1. Former pastors are invited to the special worship and sharing time.

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Thanks to diligent collectors across North America, Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmovi, Ariz., has received enough soup labels—over 1 million—to receive a free 15-passenger van. With leftover labels they received an IBM-compatible computer.

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I Am Somebody God Loves, part of the Living Stones Collection of teaching resources, received an Award of Excellence from *Children's Ministry Magazine*. The book, published by Faith & Life Press, uses Old Testament characters to show children God is with them every day.

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More than 200 Mennonite youth, parents and youth group sponsors from Kansas, Nebraska and Minnesota visited with people from Mennonite church colleges, service organizations and camps at the first Youth Opportunities Unlimited Conference on Feb. 20 at the Cross Wind Conference Center in Hesston, Kan. The conference exposed youth to the variety of church-related opportunities available to them after high school.

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A new program will let Canadian churches help refugee claimants, who were rejected by the government, without breaking the law. The program will link churches with refugee claimants who have gone "underground" in an effort to stay in Canada. Churches will "adopt" the refugee claimant and advocate for the claimant without having direct contact. Mennonite Central Committee Canada will participate in the program, created by the Inter-Church Committee for Refugees.

up to $15,000 annually;

- agreed to the possibility of new joint outreach in Asia with churches belonging to the Asia Mennonite Conference and/or North American groups;
- appointed commission member Dennis Rempel and staff member Peter Rempel to three-year terms on the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission board. *Carla Reimer*

Saskatchewan conference finds surplus

Swift Current, Sask. (GCMC)—The budget for 1993 was more than met, delegates discovered at the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan sessions here Feb. 18-19.

Due to a contribution of $30,000 from the Mennonite Youth Farm agricultural operation, the conference ended up with a surplus.

Delegates accepted a 1994 budget of $458,700, which calls for a 1.5 percent increase in giving. Subsidies for the two conference schools will remain unchanged, with Rosthern Junior College (RJC) receiving $108,000, and Swift Current Bible Institute $95,000.

Swift Current: Due to the low enrollment in recent years, the SCBI board of directors proposed and delegates approved a review and planning committee. The committee will submit a recommendation by 1996. Delegates also agreed not to decrease the SCBI subsidy for 1994 and 1995.

A statement on evangelism and children, with some changes, by the camp coordinating committee generated much discussion. It says, in part, "children's vulnerability must not be taken advantage of."

The conference also discussed how to handle a surplus of $235,000 generated by the Mennonite Youth Farm Complex. With interest, this sum has grown to $420,000.

Delegates voted to give $235,000 for a Saskatoon Mennonite Care Services project of assisted living for senior citizens in Saskatoon. The balance of $185,000 was deferred until next year.

Delegates also asked the conference executive and members to write letters encouraging the provincial government to stop casino operations. *From a report by Ingrid Janzen Lamp reporting for the* Mennonite Reporter.

Manitoba Mennos trim budget

Steinbach, Man. (GCMC)—Budget reductions dominated the gathering of delegates to the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba's 47th annual meeting here Feb. 18-19.

In light of a policy change resulting in a budget reduction of 12.5 percent, delegates took a critical look at finances. "The next step is cutting commissions, not turning out the lights earlier," said Vic Loewen, finance committee chairperson.

Tension between the churches and the conference was evident in more than one discussion. Delegates passed a resolution that called for work on defining roles of the conference and the churches and that something be presented in two years.

A resolution to add a full-time program director to the camping commission was defeated.

Another area of concern was the decision to decrease paid chaplaincy days per week from 5 1/2 to 3 1/2 and the decision to restructure the educational ministries commission. Some argued that the current director position, based on the campus of the University of Manitoba, was valuable and should remain as it is. Others felt the rural areas would be better served with the restructuring. The motion for restructuring passed with strong opposition.

Lois Edmond was elected vice-moderator. *Marj Heinrichs*, Mennonite Reporter *correspondent*

Alberta conference backs Asian churches

Tofield, Alta. (GCMC)—With only 28 students at Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute, delegates attending the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta (CMA) here Feb. 25-27 agreed that a two-year review of the school was necessary (see Saskatchewan article, this page).

Ezekiel Wong, pastor of the 120-member Calgary Chinese Mennonite Church, urged delegates to continue to support the Calgary Faith Church at the 1993 budget level. The 1994 budget proposed a drop in subsidy from $7,000 to $6,260. The delegates voted to contribute $7,000. They also agreed to add $6,000 to help the Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite Church establish the first Vietnamese Mennonite church in Edmonton.

In other action, delegates

- voted against a recommendation that would have authorized the purchase of 110 acres adjacent to Camp Valaqua;
- encouraged each CMA church to release a ministerial team member for one week of summer chaplaincy service at Camp Valaqua;
- voted to indemnify the Camp Valaqua personnel;
- decided to appoint a conference pastor half time for a two-year interim (The position, which had been full time, had not been filled since last July.);
- passed a 1994 budget of $273,169;
- established a leadership memorial fund;
- added one elected member to the CMA executive to serve as the provincial representative to the General Board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada;
- established a provincial Songfest position;
- elected Nick Dyck as vice chair.

Carla Reimer

New COM executive named

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Glendon Klaassen, North Newton, Kan., has been appointed executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, effective June 1. He has served as COM's secretary for Latin America since July 1981. He replaces Erwin Rempel, who has served since October 1982.

Klaassen

"COM is in a strong position to be a resource to General Conference churches that wish to be in mission in other countries. Together we can respond to God's call to serve. This is a new era of mission, and I am thrilled to be a part of it," said Klaassen.

Previously Klaassen served as the pastor of the Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan. He and his wife, Reitha, worked in Colombia with COM from 1959-1977. While in Colombia, Klaassen worked as a teacher, pastor and administrator, among other roles. The Klaassens are members of Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Bethel president steps down

North Newton, Kan. (BC)—Bethel College president John F. Zehr announced his plan to retire to the Bethel College board of directors during their spring meetings March 3-5.

Zehr

The board requested that Zehr continue in the presidency for one year while it conducts a search for his successor. He agreed and will retire in the summer of 1995.

"In light of my age when I came to Bethel, I always considered myself as a transitional president, one who was involved in clearing institutional agenda to make it possible for a younger person to serve for a longer term without having to deal with leftover issues," Zehr told the board. Zehr, 64, was inaugurated as president of Bethel College on Oct. 13, 1991.

Among the achievements of Zehr's tenure to date is the development of the new International Study and Internship Program in Mexico, which is administered in cooperation with Mennonite Central Committee. The first students participating in the program left for Mexico in February.

"Betty and I have enjoyed our time here, more so than any period of our lives," Zehr said. "But we have decided to adhere to our long-held plan to retire in our mid-60s to pursue other interests at a more leisurely pace."

We value your ideas.

Write to us at **The Mennonite**, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or call us at (316) 283-5100.

The Second Annual Restorative Justice Ministries Conference will run May 12-13 at Fresno Pacific College. The conference will provide a forum to discuss the biblical alternative of restorative justice. For information call (800) 909-VORP.

• • •

The *Star Tribune* newspaper in Minneapolis has set new policy not to publish nicknames and logos of sports teams that offend Native people. Editor Tim McGuire says his faith and the decision are connected. Tribal names such as "Seminoles" won't be omitted, but context will be watched closely. City names will be used in the case of teams like the Washington Redskins. The "fighting" designation will be dropped when it precedes tribal names. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

The German Mennonite Peace Committee has carried out 15 two- to three-week missions to the former Yugoslavia, with a total of 116 volunteers. The volunteer groups live with refugees. Ten-day seminars on nonviolence were held last summer in refugee camps. The manner of future work is uncertain. "What we can do is: point out God ... and beseech God's intervention and action in this dreadful conflict," said Reinhard Schanz, a worker in the Mennonite office in Split, Croatia.

• • •

A former minister to people attempting to turn from a homosexual lifestyle died of AIDS Feb. 12. For 14 years, Frank Shears was on staff at Burnaby (B.C.) Christian Fellowship, specializing in counseling for people struggling with their sexual orientation. He was former director of Exodus International, an organization working to help homosexual people become heterosexual. After giving numerous seminars on healing the homosexual, Shears returned to his old lifestyle, engaging in multiple sexual encounters with men. (*Christian Week*)

Record

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service
MCI—Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Man.

In April 1993 the Montana Legislature passed an animal-abuse law that increased the penalty for a second conviction to two years in prison and a $1,000 fine. The state's maximum penalty for second-offense wife-beating is six months and $500. (*Men Stopping Violence newsletter*)

• • •

Forty percent of U.S. college students who rejected their childhood faith said they did so because of hypocrisy, according to a survey reported by *Youthworker Update*. Those most likely to drop out of church were mainline Protestants, those who had witnessed racism or dishonesty in the church, and those whose parents attended church only on special occasions. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

Amnesty International says religious workers are often targets for governments and rebel groups that abuse human rights. Because they work for rights of minority groups, religious workers are often victims of "disappearances" and political killings. Amnesty is launching a 10-month campaign to end such killings. It is urging the United Nations to appoint a High Commissioner for Human Rights and to set up an impartial international court. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

A group of scholars is translating the Bible into the language of the Klingons, the warrior race featured on the television series *Star Trek*. The Bible will supplement a Klingon dictionary created by linguist Marc Okrand. In 1984, Paramount Studios hired Okrand to develop Klingon into a full-fledged language for *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*. The Klingon Bible Translation Project is sponsored by the Klingon Language Institute in Flourtown, Pa. It will be called the *Klingon Authorized Version*. (*The Wichita Eagle*)

DEATHS

Dorothy Krehbiel, Salem Church, Freeman, S.D., died Feb. 27. She was one of the first women to serve on COM and was past president of Women in Mission for the General Conference. She was the wife of longtime pastor Olin Krehbiel.

Vernon Leis died Feb. 26 in a traffic accident. He was pastor of East Zorra Church, Tavistock, Ont., and had also been pastor at Stirling Avenue Church, Kitchener, Ont.; in Elmira, Ont., and at Blenheim (Ont.) Church. He was the first moderator of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada.

MINISTERS

Van Bensett is serving as youth pastor at Grace Church, Chicago.

Jeanette and **Lorin Bergen** have been appointed church planters for the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia in the South Surrey/North Delta, B.C., area beginning May 1.

Elizabeth Caes is serving as pastor at West Philadelphia Fellowship.

Earl Cater has ended as pastor of Bethany Church, Freeman, S.D.

Carolyne Epp-Fransen is serving as co-interim pastor at Charleswood Church, Winnipeg.

Rudy Frose, COM worker in Brazil, will begin as interim pastor at Sherbrooke Church, Vancouver, this summer.

Ed Funk has begun as pastor at Wingham Church, Elm Creek, Man.

Mike Gingerich has ended as associate/youth pastor at Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Church.

John P. Klassen, Emmanuel Church, Winkler, Man., will begin as conference minister for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba this summer.

Dan Peters retired December 1993 as pastor at Wingham Church, Elm Creek, Man.

Glenn Siemens will become pastor of Plum Coulee (Man.) Church in May.

Roy Wahlgren has ended as pastor at Bethel Church, Wolf Point, Mont.

Stan Wiebe resigned as youth and assistant pastor at Olivet Church, Clearbrook, B.C., Jan. 16.

Don and **Joyce Wyse** have ended as co-pastors at First Church, San Francisco.

Richard Yordy is interim pastor at Foothills Church, Calgary.

WORKERS

Pamela Baum, Doylestown, Pa., began a one-year MVS term as a coordinator of education and volunteers for Hope Communities in Denver Oct. 24, 1993.

Pete Begly, Plow Creek Fellowship, Tiskilwa, Ill., began a two-month term with Christian Peacemaker Teams'

Baum

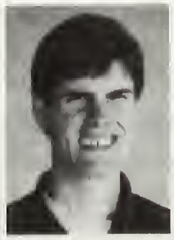
Foss

Hull

Jansta

Kaboski

Kaufman


Ladd

LaValley

Murray

Newswanger

Schlegel

Christian Peacemaker Corps in Haiti March 7.

Allan Dueck has resigned as principal of MCI, effective June 30, 1995.

Joe Foss, Mounds View, Minn., began a two-year MVS term in Wichita, Kan., Feb. 28. He works half time at the Wichita Peace Center and half time at Interfaith Ministries as an organizer for hunger issues.

Tyler Hull, Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., began a 16-month MVS term as the assistant manager of Ploughsharing Crafts in St. Louis in March.

Michelle Jansta, Sacred Heart Parish, Racine, Wis., began a one-year MVS term Feb. 2 as an AIDS advocate at a prison in New York City.

Karen Kaboski, St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Racine, Wis., began a one-year MVS term Feb. 2 in New York City.

Joanne Kaufman, Science Ridge Church, Sterling, Ill., began a 14-month MVS term in Boulder, Colo., Feb. 1. She works as an assistant project director with Nederland Youth Services.

Mike Kuepfer, Maple View Church, Wellesley, Ont., began a seven-month term in Jamaica with an Eastern Mennonite Missions Youth Evangelism Service team.

Brian Ladd, St. David's United Church, Calgary, began a one-year MVS term Jan. 23 as an office and program assistant for the National Audubon Society in Boulder, Colo.

Jeanine LaValley, Scituate, Mass., began a one-year MVS term Jan. 30 as an assistant teacher at the Community Mennonite Day Care Center in Markham, Ill.

Rachel Murray, Canton, Ohio, began a one-year MVS term Jan. 1 as a resource developer for Westlake, a shelter for the homeless in Seattle.

Kendall Newswanger, Berkey Avenue Fellowship, Goshen, Ind., began a two-year MVS term Jan. 10 as a grant writer and administrator with AIDS Services of Dallas.

Dave Regehr has resigned as vice principal of MCI, effective June 30, 1995.

Lisa Schlegel, First Church, Kitchener, Ont., began a one-year MVS term in St. Louis Feb. 1. She works as an art teacher and teacher's aide at a school for emotionally disturbed children.

Arnold M. Wedel, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., mathematics professor at Bethel College, was named professor emeritus upon retirement in May. Wedel has taught at Bethel since 1951.

Tatyana Khramova, director of a Siberian travel agency, traveled 72 hours to attend a Feb. 21-25 seminar sponsored by Mennonite Economic Development Associates and its Russian partner agency, the Association of Christians in Business. The seminar brought 46 fledgling entrepreneurs together to learn from more experienced operators of travel agencies, tour companies, restaurants and hotels. Presenters came from Manitoba, Ontario, Kansas and Ohio. Christopher Shore, who moved to Moscow last summer to direct MEDA's business training and development program in Russia, reports that by year's end the program had helped train over 500 people.

• • •

Harvest help wanted: mid-May through August.

Contact **Lance Martens, Custom Harvesting, (316) 463-2426.**

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **Mennonite Disaster Service assistant coordinator for programs**. Qualifications include a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and a nonviolent peacemaking commitment. Applicants must be willing to travel, have experience with MDS program, have worked with volunteers and have computer and communications skills. This position, salaried or service worker basis, is available June 1.

Interested people contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1151.** Applications are due May 1.

Bluffton College seeks an innovative academic leader to serve as **assistant dean for academic affairs**. A doctorate (master's considered) in a discipline represented at the college, excellence in college teaching and experience in administration are highly desirable. Depending upon interests and qualifications the new assistant academic dean will provide leadership to some of the following: a new core general education program, institutional assessment, faculty recruitment and contract reviews, first-year seminar and/or special academic events. Screening begins May 1, with the position to be filled by Aug. 1. Bluffton is a growing and dynamic General Conference Mennonite college attempting to model and articulate Anabaptist Christian perspectives to a diverse student body, a receptive neighboring community and the larger Mennonite church. Women and minority applicants are especially welcome.

Reply to **William Hawk, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817; (419) 358-3317.**

MVS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Mennonite Voluntary Service, a program of the Commission on Home Ministries, is seeking a mature Christian to serve as **Associate Director/Canada.**

Duties include: VS unit administration and development, recruitment, church relations, and public speaking.

Qualifications: Familiarity with and knowledge of the Canadian Mennonite community. Previous service experience and familiarity with voluntary service programs. Strong relational and communication skills. Must be willing to travel extensively.

This is a full-time position based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, starting in summer, 1994. Please apply by May 1, 1994.

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Menno House is a mission and hospitality house in midtown Manhattan, N.Y., a ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship.

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Contact the **Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003-2889,** phone/fax: **(212) 673-7970.**

Bluffton College invites applications for the position of **assistant director of development/director of the annual fund.** Responsibilities include planning and implementation of an annual program of solicitation of financial support for the ongoing operations of the college. Qualifications include a bachelor's degree, preferably in communications or marketing; excellent organizational, interpersonal and motivational skills, and understanding of and concurrence with the mission and values of Bluffton as a Mennonite church-related liberal arts college. Planned starting date is July 1.

Submit resumé and credentials to **Development Office, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196.**

MCC East Africa Alumni: An MCC East Coast Africa reunion will be held July 1-3, 1994, at the Laurelville (Pa.) Mennonite Church Center. Please place this date on your calendar. Program and registration information will be available soon.

If you wish for more information on the reunion or can provide information on updated addresses contact **Ruth Detweiler, 222 N. 11th St., Akron, PA 17501.**

Bluffton College invites applications for the position of **vice president for fiscal affairs.** Responsibilities include oversight of the fiscal operations of the college, a business office staff of seven and the administrative computer center. Preferred qualifications include an MBA or CPA (or its equivalence), higher education administrative experience, knowledge of and experience with information technology, good interpersonal skills, and understanding of and concurrence with the mission and values of Bluffton as a Mennonite church-related liberal arts college. Desired beginning date is Aug. 1, 1994.

Submit application, resumé and credentials to **Elmer Neufeld, President, Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817-1196.**

Mennonite Conciliation Service is sponsoring two workshops:

- **Advanced Consulting Skills for Group and Congregational Intervention,** April 28-30, 1994, Akron, Pa. Leaders are David Brubaker and Nancy Good Sider. Using systems theory principles as a framework, this training will focus on assessment and intervention in group (especially congregational) conflicts. Participants will review assessment materials, work with designing intervention processes and practice using group discussion and decision-making tools. (prerequisite: experience in mediation and/or group consulting)

- **MCS 10th Annual Summer Mediation Training Institute,** July 11-15, 1994, Akron, Pa. Leaders are Carolyn Schrock-Shenk, Regina Shands Stoltzfus, Jim Stutzman. A basic skills and concepts experience, the MCS Summer Institute introduces participants to the interpersonal mediation process and to group facilitation principles and tools. Hands-on practice sessions and discussions of the roles of culture, power and ethics in conflict resolution make for a rich exploration of practical peacemaking.

For more information contact **Debra Gingerich, Mennonite Conciliation Service, Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-3889.**

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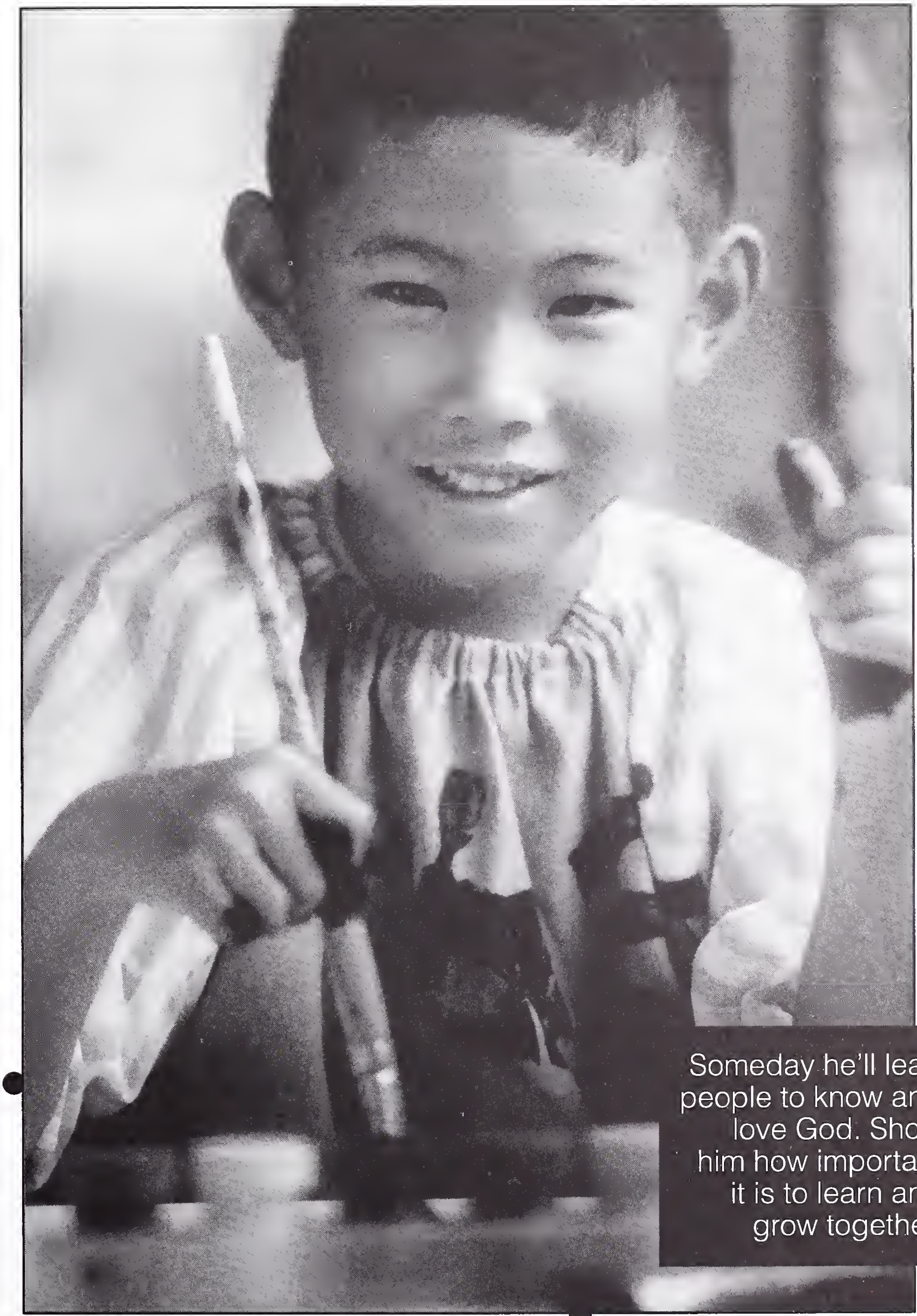

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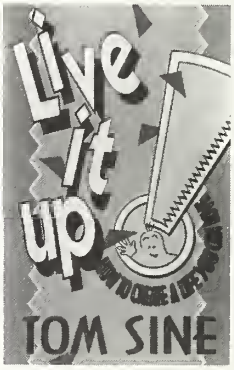
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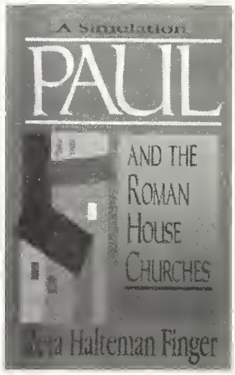
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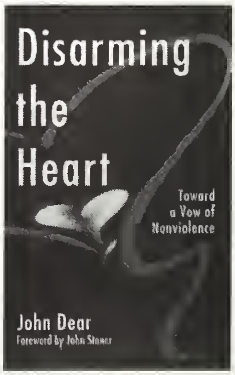
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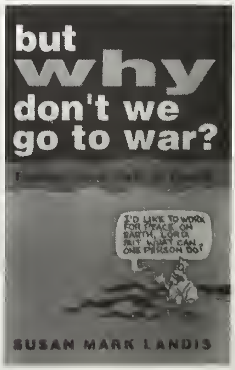
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SUSAN MARK LANDIS

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Reviews

BOOKS

Jesus wasn't a Greek

A Guide to the New Testament World *by Albert A. Bell Jr. (Herald Press, 1993, 328 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Zerbe, Winnipeg

This book by Albert Bell, professor of classics and history at Hope College, Holland, Mich., is intended as a companion in the intellectual and spiritual journey of understanding the New Testament on a new level. It is targeted especially for the nonprofessional reader and written in a style accessible to high school graduates.

Bell believes that a proper understanding of the New Testament requires a guide to the historical and cultural context of the New Testament world: "Before making faith assertions, we must study the New Testament as objectively as possible to be certain that we understand what it really means to say and not let cultural baggage—its or ours—get in the way."

Unfortunately Bell has succumbed to a subjective bias in deciding beforehand which background is most important. He includes seven chapters on the Greco-Roman context (203 pages) and leaves a mere single chapter (36 pages) on the Judaic background of the New Testament.

Moreover, I found the chapter on the Judaic background to be the weakest of the book. We find no summary of the chief contours of early Jewish faith in the first century (even though Bell can comfortably talk of "mainstream Judaism" and of how Jesus went "beyond the boundaries of Judaism"), we find nothing on the Samaritans, nothing on the temple-state complex in Jerusalem and only passing reference to the Great Sanhedrin. The depiction of the Sadducees and Pharisees as "essentially religious" (as opposed to socially or politically interested) is patently misleading, and there is a complete neglect of the socioeconomic circumstances of first-century Judea and Galilee. We thus have no insight into the life of average rural peasants—90 percent of the population of Palestine. This oversight can then lead Bell to present Jesus misguidedly in purely religious terms as a rabbi who was not a homeless, itinerant preacher but who likely "owned a large home" and whose father was a "general contractor" who "built his family a comfortable home."

Seven-eighths of this book is quite solid, and the bibliographies included on all topics are excellent. But this is not the first book on backgrounds to the New Testament I would recommend, given the inadequacy of the one-eighth part on the Judaic world—what I consider to be the basic premise for understanding the New Testament.

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Resources

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- **Barbara: Sarah's Legacy** by James Yoder (Faith & Life Press, 1994, $9.95 U.S./$12.95 Can.) continues the story begun in Yoder's earlier novel, *Sarah of the Border Wars* (FLP, 1993).
- **Lord, Hear Our Prayers** (Mennonite Central Committee Canada) is the fourth resource packet from MCC on the issue of sexual abuse and domestic violence. It contains worship resources, resources for youth and adult Christian education and lists of resources and agencies. Available from all MCC offices, $5 suggested donation.
- **A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation** by Wade Clark Roof (HarperSanFrancisco, 1993, $12 U.S./$16 Can.) looks at the "Boomer" culture and their search for meaning and values today.
- **Dying We Live: Meditations for Lent and Easter** by Eugen Drewermann (Orbis Books, 1994, $12.95 U.S.) explores how the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus form the core of Christian identity.

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Editorial

Which incarnation do we follow?

Robert Hull

Since the end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War in 1945, war and preparations for war have been the incarnation of almost half our total tax dollars. Think about that.

In 1945, shortly after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, U.S. President Harry Truman exclaimed, "This is the greatest thing in history."

Such a statement asks us to forget about that other incarnation, the one at tiny Bethlehem in Israel, that obscure outpost of the Roman Empire. We are encouraged to focus our attention on the biggest bang available for our bucks, to be awestruck at the technological prowess of our military scientists.

> We are encouraged to focus on the biggest bang available for our bucks, to be awestruck at the technological prowess of our military scientists.

Many people profit enormously from the power and the wealth that comes from manufacturing such weapons. They do not want us to make the connection that in the end it is our tax dollars that so handsomely line their pockets, that build the $300,000 homes in the suburbs of defense-contractor cities such as Wichita, Kan., Lancaster, Pa., and Winnipeg.

They do not want us to connect the life, teachings, death as a political criminal, and resurrection of Jesus with anything representing concerns of conscience about their weapons.

They promote arms sales around the world as the foundation of our U.S. and Canadian balance-of-trade statistics. Never mind that bloated salaries for upwardly mobile defense industry managers are built upon death for the women and children who are most often the civilian casualties of war in Grenada, Libya, Lebanon, Panama and Iraq, among the many violent conflicts of recent years.

Anabaptist heritage: But "you can't fool all the people all the time," as Abraham Lincoln once said. The stands of conscience by Ed Olfert, Menno Klassen, Jane Pritchard and Don Kaufman (see page 6) testify to the continuing uneasiness among Mennonites about seeing our tax dollars incarnated in war preparations and arms sales. Arthur Boers (see page 3) makes clear that such prophetic witness is, if anything, more true to our Anabaptist heritage than our recent Mennonite history has been.

In recent years I have joined with Don Kaufman and 20 others in the Newton, Kan., area to form a support group concerned with the military use of our taxes. Our refused tax dollars and contributions build up a "Heartland Peace Tax Fund," which in March granted $750 to local human needs agencies and $150 to the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund in Washington.

In St. Louis, Bill Ramsey (staffer for the regional American Friends Service Committee office) spent 30 days in jail in 1993 for his prophetic witness. As a condition of probation, he was ordered by the federal judge to pay his 1993 military taxes, due this April. Bill has done as ordered, sending personal checks to seven life-affirming agencies and asking them to certify to the court that he has done so. It is unlikely that the federal judge will agree that Bill Ramsey has paid his taxes in this way. Bill is preparing himself spiritually for more prison time. But his point is made: We Americans and Canadians are robbing from the human needs so evident in our societies to build and sell weapons.

The witness of some among us to this truth goes on. Whether they continue to stand alone depends upon whether more of us come to incarnate the peacemaking of Jesus Christ in our own witness.

Robert Hull is secretary for peace and justice for the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Recyclable

Inside

Two poems for spring / p. 7

Learning to fall backward without fear / p. 8

The hidden danger of integration / p. 12

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 08
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MENNONITES: THE NEXT GENERATION

- Three Bible characters teach us about young adults (see page 3)
- 6 ways you can help young adults (see page 5)

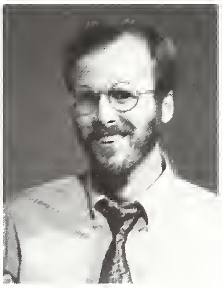
Prologue

Young adults are sometimes called the future of the church, yet the rest of us often ignore them. We act like they will just appear like magic to take over leadership of the church. Why not welcome their participation now? Why not get to know them, listen to their questions and concerns, invite them to use their gifts and learn from them what God may want to teach us?

Fred Martin calls us to listen and learn from them as well as support them (pages 3-6). A young adult reference council (see page 6) offers ways for the church to do just that (page 5).

Two Mennonite poets, one a young adult herself, offer poetry to help us welcome spring's beauty (see page 7).

While many wring their hands about gangs and violence in our cities, Galen Quenzer and others in Fresno, Calif., are doing something constructive (see pages 8-9). Galen, a member of Mennonite Community Church in Fresno, helps bring young gang members and police together in a camp setting, where they learn to listen to one another and trust each other.



Mark Regier, a young adult involved in church structures, speaks out about what is not being addressed in the discussion of integration (page 12).

Finally, assistant editor Larry Penner speaks to the question, "What do young adults want anyway?" *gh*

Next issue: Health care in Canada and the United States

Cover: Photo by Carin Loewen

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MENNONITES: THE NEXT GENERATION

Three biblical characters teach us about the gifts and the needs of young adults.

Boomers got great music and free love, while busters get stuck with classic rock, AIDS and cleaning up the environment.

Bonita Suter

Fred W. Martin

There is a joke about a frustrated mother of a young adult who had no interest in participating in church. She would slip her son Bible verses beside his breakfast cereal and post announcements on the fridge about coming young adult activities, but her efforts met with no success. Finally in desperation she prayed that the Lord would remove whatever it was that was standing between her son and the church. And in a puff of smoke she disappeared.

As a church community we must be concerned about being relevant to young adults. We must be focused on meeting the needs of young adults in our congregations and speaking to the reality of young adulthood.

During the late '60s to early '80s, Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) came out of the swamp and found stable professions, purchased and paid off houses that doubled or tripled in value. Is it any wonder that today's young adults are cynical when they realize that starting pay for entry-level positions has gone nowhere in constant dollars between 1968 and 1993, while the cost of education during this same period has skyrocketed? In addition, many housing markets are hard to break into as double incomes become a necessity, not a luxury of self-fulfillment, for young couples.

Free love: Baby Busters (born 1964-1974) are paying into pensions they may never see. They will be stuck with huge government deficits and a world that is stripped of its resources. Boomers got great music and free love, while busters get stuck with classic rock, AIDS and cleaning up the environment.

Congregations need to provide ways for young adults to integrate into the life of the congregation as full members.

Many young people cannot find the jobs they desire. The American Bureau of Labor statistics forecasts that nearly one-third of college graduates from the class of 1990 through 2005 will take jobs that do not require college degrees.

Young adults are also getting married later. In previous generations young adults married younger and because of this were accepted into leadership positions in the church. For some reason churches accept married people into leadership more readily than single people. As a result the church misses the gifts of single 18- to 27-year-olds.

Often when we look to the Scriptures for direct guidance we are disappointed because the Scriptures don't speak directly to our situation. People in the Bible, such as David, Ruth, Esther, Mary and John Mark, are examples of young adult idealism and commitment. Solomon and Jesus as a boy are models of inquiry and searching. Jacob and the Rich Young Ruler are examples of independence and upward mobility.

The Rich Young Ruler

The Rich Young Ruler may be seen as a typical young adult. Matthew 19:20 describes the man as "young." In Luke 18:21 the ruler says that he has observed the commandments since his "youth."

Let's look at our young adults and love them. Let's listen to their stories and hear their questions.

We may not have an abundance of young wealthy people in our churches, but many aspire to this goal. Many of these people probably have fulfilled the commandments from a young age. They faithfully attended Sunday school, youth group, Bible studies and were never out of line or rebellious. This young man in Mark is like many young adults who are searching for spiritual fulfillment. Wealth, power and security have not satisfied him. He is searching for something more and asks advice.

Jesus' answer cuts to the root of the problem. First, "Jesus looked at him and loved him" (Mark 10:21). Jesus responds to him personally. This is what we need to do. Let's look at our young adults and love them. Let's listen to their stories and hear their questions. Let's hear reports on Sunday morning about how they have been changed by a term at college or a year in voluntary service. Let's listen to them as they read and interpret the Scriptures in sermons or meditations.

We must also be ready to challenge young searchers of truth. Jesus does not back away from this task. He says, "Sell what you have and give to the poor." Jesus invites him to a different level of faith. He challenges the young man to walk away from his wealth and invites him to follow and become a disciple.

If we want to minister with each other as Jesus did we must be ready to encourage and challenge each other into meaningful discipleship. We must create an environment for the search and nourishment of true discipleship. We must be open to share with each other our doubts and concerns. Young adults need this kind of open, personal support from the church.

John Mark

In Acts 12:12, Peter escapes from prison and goes to the house of "Mary the mother of John, whose other name was Mark." Acts 12:25 refers to John Mark being brought along by Barnabas and Paul.

On another journey (Acts 13:13) John Mark apparently abandons the mission in the city of Perga in the province of Pamphylia and makes the long journey back home to Jerusalem. This desertion later creates a separation between Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41). Barnabas wants his cousin (see Colossians 4:10) to go along, but Paul says no.

But Paul's opinion of John Mark appears to have changed by the time he wrote the letter to the Colossians. And in 2 Timothy 4:11 Paul instructs Timothy to "get Mark and bring him with you; for he is useful in my ministry."

As a young adult John Mark needed space and was not always sure of the direction he should go. Perhaps this is why he left the mission at Perga. This did not impress Paul. Many church leaders are not impressed by the "undependable" nature of young adults. "You can't count on them to make it to committee meetings. Their phone numbers and addresses seem to change as often as the weather. And their attendance at church is irregular at best."

But another response is to be patient and understanding like Barnabas, who offered John Mark another chance.

Young adults are often under the shadow of others who have expectations different from theirs. We all need to make our own decisions, to take time and make space for the development of personal identity and faith. Sometimes this means a time away from the church community. For many young people this is a time for educational pursuits or searching for vocational identity away from home.

But this time of separation need not be a time of isolation. The church can

MCC Alumni please respond!

MCC Alumni please respond!

reach out in a variety of ways. On one hand, we need to provide programming—retreats, volleyball tournaments, coffeehouses, Bible studies, banquets, hikes, car rallies, ball games, beach parties, music festivals, campus groups—specialized activities that give young adults a peer group.

> ***We need to allow young adults the freedom to reinterpret the important elements of the Mennonite faith—such as discipleship, peace and justice—to their context.***

On the other hand, congregations need to provide ways for young adults to integrate into the life of the congregation as full members. Young adults want to contribute and be taken seriously. Let your young adults plan and participate in worship leading, preaching, leading music. Let them serve on committees when they are able, shorten lengths of terms to accommodate their work loads at school. In my home congregation our worship committee creates four-week series and delegates the responsibility for shorter periods. Many young adults take part.

Let young adults show their creativity, but don't neglect them. Give them mentors to walk beside them. Foster relationships between generations.

It appears that after leaving Paul in Perga, John Mark did not totally cut ties with the community, since his name comes up later. He kept a connection. Young adults need to maintain some connection, some channel of dialogue to clarify a developing faith. We need reference points and landmarks as we make our way in our journeys.

Mary

In Luke, Mary illustrates the important bond of friendship as she seeks out the caring and understanding Elizabeth. She also illustrates the bond provided by a community of faith and its history and theology.

In Mary's world there were few opportunities for young people and fewer options for a young woman. Many decisions, like marriage, were ready-made. In her society, families negotiated the marriage contract. And for young adults in Mary's time there was a limited number of vocational roles to choose from as they made the transition from childhood to adulthood fairly quickly. Marrying young and filling prescribed roles as wives and mothers was the norm.

How different from our world, where many refer to young adults as the "postponed generation." This postponement is not just the result of a desire to prolong the freedom of adolescence by prolonging educational pursuits, traveling extensively or drifting from one dead-end job to another. Young people may postpone decisions about vocation and relationships as a way of avoiding the uncertainty of the future. Students no longer graduate with the assurance that their education will be a ticket to the good life.

In spite of having few choices, Mary must make a big decision. Does she acknowledge the presence of God in her life and believe this strange messenger, who tells her she will be the mother of God's Son, or does she ignore it and try to escape?

6 ways you can help young adults

1 Sponsor a "nightclub" in your church. Decorate a suitable part of the church in a tasteful manner with small tables, tablecloths, napkins, candles and dinnerware. Set up a sound system and play music young adults enjoy. Perhaps have live entertainment. Cook potluck meals to be served buffet style. This may provide an inviting atmosphere from which a young adult group may spring.

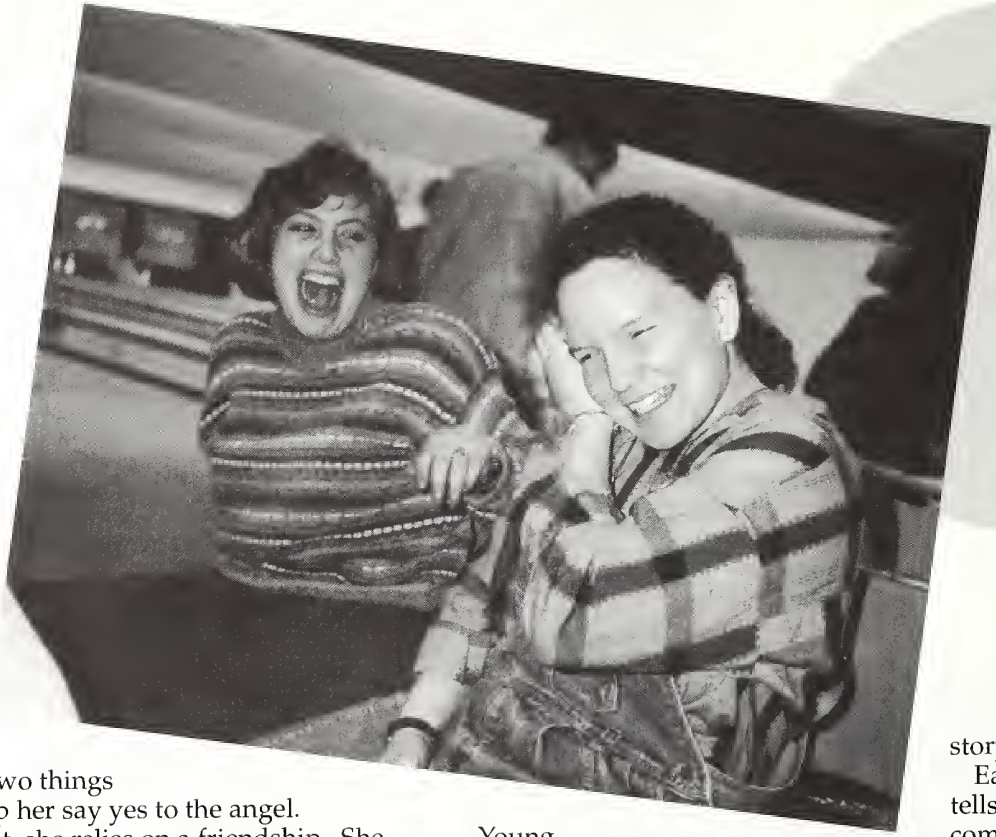
2 Keep in touch with the young adults who have moved away. Letters, care packages, tapes of services, pictures of events in congregational life, anything is fodder. These contacts may sometimes be the only church contact they have.

3 Put aside budget money to send young adults to local retreats. Often your local camp hosts at least one young adult retreat per year. If they don't, encourage them to. The Young Adult Reference Council (see page 6) member in your area can help you with ideas for themes and speakers.

4 Before the annual church meeting, host a pizza party for young adults. Introduce the issues that the congregation will discuss in the upcoming meeting. Ask the young adults for their reaction. Encourage them to ask questions and to question actions and assumptions. Encourage them to participate in the annual meeting as a group or as individuals. Allow them to develop and formulate proposals and issues they would like to bring to the meeting.

5 Honor those young adults who have not left "home." They are a valuable group. Often they are forgotten because they do not move away. Encourage them to become part of a small group. Explore with them if a young adult group is what they would like. Encourage them to become integrated into church life and provide a mentor or person to take special interest in them. Provide opportunities for them to try out their talents and abilities.

6 Rites of passage are important. High school and college graduation are important milestones. The first full-time job, moving away, staying when everyone else moves—these are all chances to acknowledge people during worship services. Let them know the church recognizes their maturing process and will be there through good and bad times.



Bonita Suter

A bond develops when people care for each other, like Mary and Elizabeth. A bond of friendship.

Two things help her say yes to the angel. First, she relies on a friendship. She visits Elizabeth. This kind of unconditional support is critical for young adults.

The second thing that supported Mary was her faith community. She is aware of the history and theology of her community. She knows the themes of justice, the way her people have understood the sovereignty of the Lord. She knows how previous generations have talked about the power of God.

We need to let young adults translate the salvation story in a way that makes sense in their world. For example, we need to see how their notion of community in an urban context is different from or similar to what a previous generation knew as community in a rural setting. We need to allow young adults the freedom to reinterpret the important elements of the Mennonite faith—such as discipleship, peace and justice—to their context.

Mary knows the story of her faith community as she proclaims the coming of justice. We need to tell our stories and make young people aware of the faith tradition. We need to take time in our family settings and in our worship and education times at church. However, we need to let young adults retell the story in ways that make sense to them.

Young adults today are more open to talking about spirituality. Mary is a good example of being spiritually in touch with God in a personal way. She has made a conscious decision to be the Lord's servant. She gives us words of hope and encouragement.

And she gives birth to a child. What better symbol than a child to illustrate a message of hope. A new generation to carry on. A bond develops when people care for each other, like the bond between Mary and Elizabeth. A bond of friendship. There is also the bond of a community and its faith story—its history and its theology.

Each generation learns the story and tells it in its own way. As a church community we need to take responsibility to teach the story to a new generation. And we need to be taught by the new generation as we see how the story gets passed on.

Fred W. Martin is development director at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in Kitchener, Ont. This article is based on three talks he gave at last October's Western District Conference.

Young adult reference council

Central District: Martha Showalter (313) 665-9652
Eastern District: Monica Schroeder (215) 721-9601
Northern District: Steve Ratzlaff (402) 467-1526
Pacific District: Jeff Wright (310) 927-7088
Western District: Mike Regier (316) 283-6370

Alberta: June Dyck (403) 223-1788
British Columbia: Imbenzi George (604) 850-6658
Eastern Canada: Shirley Grove (519) 578-2778
Manitoba: Ingrid Cornies (204) 334-0442
Saskatchewan: Anna Rehan (306) 232-4274

Coordinator: Ken Hawkley (316) 283-5100

In the meadow yellow with dandelions and croaking with crickets . . .

Sharon Fransen

I want to spread out an old, worn quilt.
The pink one with scraps of Grandmother's
printed blue work dress, the one she wore
while snipping chicks' beaks at the Hatchery.
Red squares of Grandpa's plaid flannel shirt
wrapped tight around baby lambs born late in the night.
And forming the center of each log cabin
snippets of Mother's pink Easter dress
cut up long after the hem was let out the last time.
I want to spread out the quilt that has been folded
and hugged so long the fraying edges reveal
the dirty cotton innards bunched together
like kin for a family photo.

I want to spread out my history
and my mother's history and her mother's history,
wrap my arms around the earth,
cover it with this quilted life
of newborn daughters, whooping cough, dying fathers,
and all church picnics on Sunday afternoons in May.
As I lie alone in the tall grass,
the stars will beckon like a full pincushion
before a quilting.

Sharon Fransen lives in Harleysville, Pa.

Early spring

Ruth Naylor

The hyacinth
  holds its face high,
    turning not away
  from this morning's snow.
Frozen flakes
  frost pink cheeks,
    stinging,
  patiently waiting,
Knowing God
  uses stress
    to strengthen
  and prove his creation.
Soon other wildflowers,
  uncultivated renegades,
    will spring up
In living armies,
  defying winter's threat,
    nearly spent.
The change flags
  yet another new season
    for growth.

Ruth Naylor lives in Bluffton, Ohio.

LEARNING TO FALL BACKWARD W

Galen Quenzer brings together police and gang members to help them learn trust.

Larry Penner

Children on the south side of Fresno, Calif., learn racism before math. Hispanic, Asian, African-American and Anglo gangs tustle in the schools. Just outside the city, the same children sing songs and climb rocks together.

Many of the hardened children who come to Camp Esteem have never even seen Fresno's north side. The camp surrounds them in trees and gives them games to play. It puts Asian, African-American, Hispanic and Anglo children in the same cabins and on the same teams. It takes them out of their element. It lets them be children again.

Then, halfway through the week, there's another surprise.

"We don't let the kids know until midweek that the counselors are police officers," says Galen Quenzer, 32, gang intervention project manager for the camp. "The kids usually don't believe it at first."

John Fries, a lieutenant in the Fresno Police Department, founded the camp seven years ago. Not all the counselors are police—many are teachers—but one of the main purposes of the camp remains to bring together police and youth to learn to know each other.

"The kids are distrustful of authority," says Galen, a member of Mennonite Community Church in Fresno. "They learned it's better not to trust because they get burned time after time. Camp opens up their ideas to a whole new way of looking at things."

The education goes both ways: "The police learn that not all these kids are punks and need to be locked up. They learn that these kids have the same needs and loves and wants that everyone else has."

Rey Wallace, a police officer and counselor at the camp, told *The Fresno Bee* reporter Lori A. Carter, "I've never really dealt with young adults other than when I'm throwing them down or throwing them in jail. ... Camp changed my perspectives."

Trust activities: The camp reaches the kids through doing, not talking. "They're not into sitting down and talking about their problems," Galen says. So he uses what he calls "adventure-based counseling." It involves trust activities.

In one activity, the children and counselors take turns falling backward from a four-foot-high platform into the waiting arms of the others. Other activities, like distance hiking and rappelling, emphasize personal challenge and taking positive risks. Challenges like bridge-building emphasize cooperation and problem solving.

Larry Penner

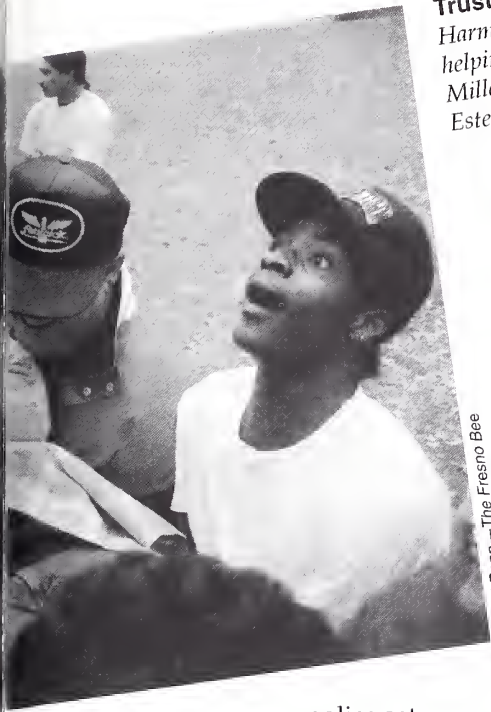
'Hard not to feel compassion': *Galen*

The games don't end at the camp. Although the kids only come to the camp for one five-day stay, follow-up games and community service projects take place weekly, through Fresno's schools. Beginning in fourth grade, the program follows the children through middle school.

But the children only come to the camp once, and leaving is hard. "At the camp the kids decide they want to live differently, just like I did at church camp," Galen says. "It is a mountaintop experience, then they go back to their neighborhoods and their dysfunctional families."

Many of the children are able to carry a part of the camp experience home with them. George, after attending the camp, returned home to discover that someone he knew, recently paroled, was beating his mother. George called the police, something he never would have done before attending camp. When the

HOUT FEAR



Trust: *Donte Harmon reacts to helping catch Marc Miller at Camp Esteem.*

Michael Penn—The Fresno Bee

police set up a perimeter around the neighborhood, George followed the offender on bicycle. The offender broke through the police line, and George followed him until he could call the police again to finally apprehend the man.

Later, at a camp reunion, one of the officers who had been George's counselor said he had been there. He had recorded the incident over the police radio, and together they listened to the adventure again.

"At first I saw the camp's work as teaching. Now I see that real changes happen because of the relationships," Galen says. "The activities facilitate the relationship. Knowing people in leadership and authority positions like teachers and police helps kids see their society in a new way. And having someone that cares about them, someone that's constant—for a lot of them, it's the first time that has happened."

Brandon Heflin, 17, told Lori Carter, "I tripped out last night, playing [the board game] Clue. If they were wearing their uniforms, would I be sitting there playing Clue with them? No." Irma Estrada, 16, told her simply, "It feels good to have people say they are proud of me."

And the relationships change the adults, too. "The counselors can't help but develop a caring relationship with the kids," Galen says. "When you hear their stories, it's hard not to feel some compassion."

Spiritual growth: Camp Esteem is supported by Boys and Girls Clubs of Fresno, Fresno Unified Schools, the police and sheriff departments and the probation courts. While Boys and Girls Clubs of Fresno does have spiritual growth as a stated goal, none of the groups is Christian. In some ways, Galen would like to change that, but in other ways, he's not so sure.

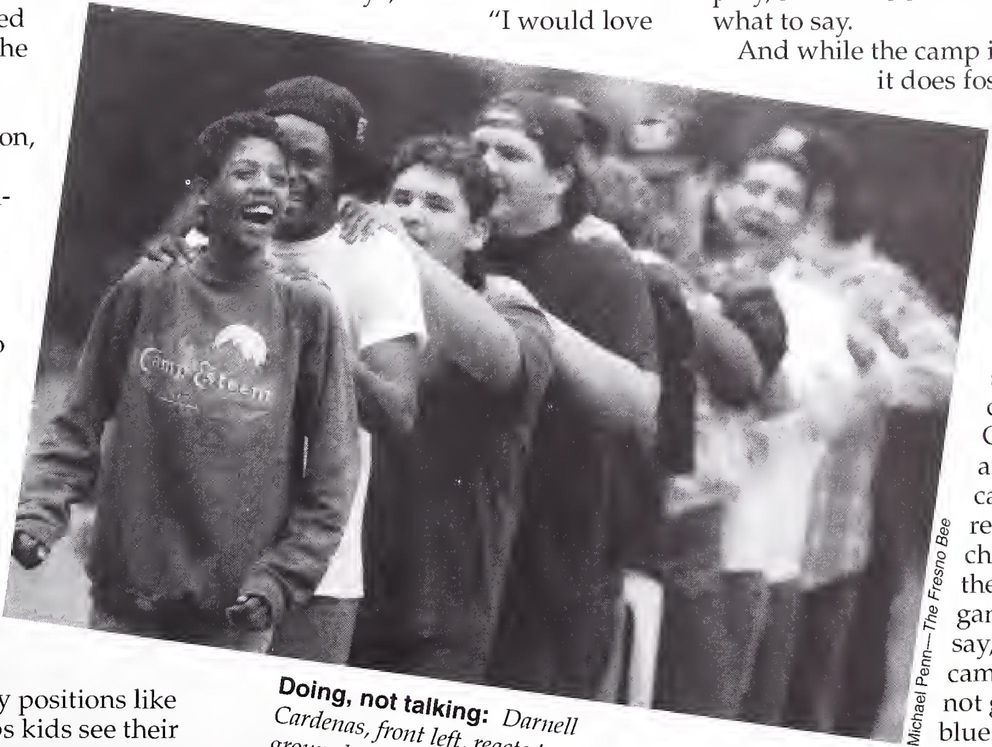
"I would love to have the program supported by the church so we could talk more about spirituality," he says. "But I wouldn't change the way we start. First you have to have their trust before they'll ever listen to you. If you started [with religion], there would be a lot of rejection, but by the end of the week they're open to whatever you have to say."

And the kids do learn about spirituality. "The faith and hope I have as a Christian influences my ability to do this. If you didn't have faith that God was working through you, it would be hopeless," Galen says.

He says the counselors often share with the kids about their faith and the difference it has made in their lives. The camp prays before every meal. Usually Galen does the first prayer, then asks for volunteers. Often the children say they don't know how to pray, so he meets with them to decide what to say.

And while the camp is not Christian, it does foster spiritual change. Children who the first evening are too "cool" to sing at campfire by the end of the week request songs. The combination of God's creation and counselors' care inevitably reaches the children, letting them set aside gang colors and say, as one girl at campfire did, "I'm not gonna claim blue or red, I'm gonna claim life."

Larry Penner is assistant editor of The Mennonite.



Doing, not talking: *Darnell Cardenas, front left, reacts to a group shoulder massage during his week at Camp Esteem.*

Michael Penn—The Fresno Bee

Letters

Secular wasteland

I've been so glad to receive *The Mennonite* this year. You've had some courageous themes, especially racism (Jan. 11 issue) and AIDS (Jan. 25 issue). Thanks.

I am a graduate student, and I'm shocked at how little it seems mainstream students have considered issues of faith and life and the integration of the two.

Keep up the good work. The dialogue in *The Mennonite* keeps me alive in this secular wasteland. *Beth Hege, Eugene, Ore.*

Other models of ministry

John Esau and Vern Preheim have expressed their concerns about the "crisis" facing the General Conference with regard to the scarcity of ministers for especially large congregations (see Feb. 8 and Feb. 22 issues, respectively). I have several observations on this "crisis."

The expectations on ministers of large congregations, as we define the job, are almost impossible. (1) They are expected to have the management skills of CEOs of medium-sized companies, with large paid and volunteer staffs; (2) they must be articulate scholars able to deliver coherent, challenging sermons regularly; (3) they are expected to have expert mediation and counseling skills in order to deal with difficult, even unresolvable, personal and family problems in the congregation; (4) they must of course have impeccable personal moral records and harmonious family lives. For this they expect to be well-paid, if they are not independently wealthy, to be able to build up a retirement fund and housing equity in old age.

Where are the "supermen"(or superwomen) for these positions to come from? Seminaries rarely train students in the financial management, executive administration and mediation areas, so unless they have acquired such skills elsewhere, these areas of ministerial responsibility become extraordinary challenges waiting to become personal and career disasters.

Whose congregational leadership model is this that we've adopted and believe we must honor? I'm not sure, but I doubt that it's the only model.

Our historic leadership model may have been bankrupt, with lay*men*, often beyond accountability, running and controlling their congregations for life. But other models of congregational leadership have evolved out of this historic Anabaptist-Mennonite model that we've largely replaced in North American General Conference circles. Notably, in South American (Brazil and Paraguay) GC settings, large congregations are administered by term-elected member-moderators paid by the congregation; with the deacons they meet the congregation's daily institutional and personal needs. The elder role has mostly been abolished and replaced by a council of ministers at the regional or colony level (at least in the Chaco); Sunday morning and other pulpit times are served by a rotating pool of volunteer and professional ministers and others who are assigned to not only their own but mostly other congregations on the basis of their desired speaking loads. In the Chaco, a region with a Mennonite population comparable to that in central Kansas, this pool includes dozens of speakers who, in a year's time, speak to a particular congregation. This model breaks up the tasks we expect of our "super-preachers" into a number of more tolerable parts, allowing for a continuum of services from those paid for to those handled by the laity.

It seems to me that it is not the church that is in crisis but our particular model of the professional ministry that expects the almost impossible from ordinary mortals. As in so many other areas of our North American lives, community-embedded service has been replaced by capitalized professionalism. Perhaps it is time to go back to the institutional drawing boards to find an Anabaptist or Believers' Church concept of congregational leadership. *John M. Janzen, Elbing, Kan.*

Stop the cycle of abuse

In response to the woman who wrote the letter about verbal abuse in the March 8 issue: I sympathize with and understand your pain. I want to say, however, that anyone who endures physical abuse experiences emotional as well as physical pain from that abuse. While it is true that "the physical scars heal," it is also true that physical abuse leaves enduring emotional scars. And it is rare that physical abuse is not accompanied by some form of verbal abuse.

I'm sorry for anyone who has to tolerate any form of abuse; to endure physical and emotional abuse from those who are supposed to love you is painful and confusing. It becomes difficult to know what constitutes a "normal" relationship. My idealistic wish is that someday all abuse will be eliminated and that we will all treat each other with love and kindness. In the meantime, I guess we'll all have to do what we can to stop the cycle of abuse in "our own little corner of the world" and to be there for those victims who need us. *Teresa Weaver, Salina, Kan.*

Don't generalize Mennonites

I must correct Walfried Goossen's interpretation (Nov. 23, 1993) of my earlier letter.

I do not deny that some Mennonite pacifists can be arrogant toward soldiers or others who see an acceptable and God-given role for the U.S. military. Also regrettable is when we put our own standard of living ahead of any Christ-centered pacifist or antiwar position.

Unfortunately Mr. Goossen has missed the main point of my letter—even though it was stated in its first paragraph. Using words like "always" generalizes all Mennonites. I do not believe—and I really do not think Mr. Goossen does either—that we are or have always been self-serving, dishonest and insincere heathens.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, I hope I am proud of the good and ashamed of the bad inside and outside our church. I have been both proud and ashamed of both groups many times.

Diversity of opinion on political, social and theological issues has always been present in the church. But I refuse to condemn the motivations and souls of my fellow Mennonites—or fellow Christians—just because I disagree with them.

I ask Mr. Goossen to do the same. Maybe we will all be surprised at how much we actually have in common. *Michael Bauman, San Francisco*

Two-parent families crucial

Susan Rensberger's letter (Jan. 25 issue) needs to be challenged because of some important research that has been done during the last 20 years. Some references to this work are below. A good review of this research was printed in *The Atlantic* (April 1993).

Barbara Dafoe Whitehead writes, "The social science evidence is in: Though it may benefit the adults involved, the dissolution of intact two-parent families is harmful to large numbers of children." Moreover, she argues, "family diversity in the form of increasing numbers of single-parent and step-parent families does *not* strengthen the social fabric but, rather, dramatically weakens and undermines society."

It's risky to discuss these questions. In the past, whenever the results of changes in family structure have been brought up there has been controversy, then retreat, then silence. But it is also risky to ignore problems that are associated with disruption of families. "Overall child well-being has declined, despite a decrease in number of children per family, an increase in educational level of parents and high levels of public spending," Whitehead writes. The longer we ignore this the harder it will be to improve children's lives.

The cultural shift from "divorce is bad" before World War II to "divorce is OK" and even to the celebration of unwed motherhood means, in general, that adult happiness is more important than that of children … to the adults. Wallerstein's studies showed that children did not recover completely from the divorce. Five years after divorce over a third of the children experienced depression, 10 years later a significant number were troubled, drifting and underachieving. Fifteen years later many found it difficult to establish strong love relationships.

Intact two-parent families may not be perfect, but they give children definite advantages over single-parent and step-parent families. Some social scientists try to show that it is the family conflict rather than the family breakup that causes the children's difficulties, but only a minority of divorces grow out of pathological situations.

Sara McLanahan points out three aspects of the life of intact two-parent families that are significant to the well-being of children. First, children share in the income of both parents so there is more economic stability than in one-parent families. Second, a stable authority structure is present. Divorce usually disrupts this. Third, the continual presence of the same people in the intact family gives more stability. A step-parent or boyfriend or girlfriend threatens the child's security.

The results of the great American experiment in breaking up families are showing that adults benefit from the changes in family life but *not* children. This is the first generation in the history of the United States that is doing worse psychologically, socially and economically than its parents.

If one of the values of Mennonite family life is to keep the family together for the sake of the children, that has been vindicated by this research. *Richard Pannabecker, Bluffton, Ohio*

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Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*

From our mission workers

Recife, Brazil—"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). These words have taken on new meaning in my life. When I became a Christian 10 years ago, these words meant to stop going places, stop wearing pants, submit completely, not express my thoughts, my questions, my doubts. It meant doing all these things to please God.

To please God? According to my church leaders, yes. My history of being abused had made me an abuser, and even after becoming a Christian my tendency to abuse was present. I abused, felt guilty, repented and abused again. To be sure, my abusive behavior took on different forms from what I had suffered as a child, but it was abusive behavior—I could not deny that. My fellow Christians told me to pray and fast more in order to gain victory over my anger, which was so inappropriately expressed. But despite my lack of sleep from praying the nights away, despite my increasing fasts, my anger came out time and again like a furious hurricane with no warning.

What did 2 Corinthians mean? "I am a new creation." Powerful words yet contradicting what I was living. It wasn't until I went to counseling that I began to understand the dynamics of my abusive behavior. It was then that the old began to fade away, ever so slowly, and the new began to spring up. It wasn't until I let flow the tears of pain and fear that I began to be "a new creation." The old coping and surviving skills began to be replaced because they were no longer valid. I was and am a new creation. So new that I don't know if I'll find myself. This process of replacement is slow. I'm confused and tired; it's such a long, long walk.

But the next verse gives me hope: "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. … " Lo and behold, I am finding myself in a new ministry: reconciliation. Yes, I am a broken person, but I thank God that in my brokenness I am whole and complete in God. Pray that God will use my brokenness to bring reconciliation to other lives here in Recife. *Gloria Epp*

Ideas your church can try

The senior high youth at Zion Mennonite Church in Souderton, Pa., send congregational care packages to church members in college and overseas. The packages include things like toiletries, snacks, stationery, school supplies and letters.

Send your ideas to The Mennonite, *Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Speaking out

The hidden danger of integration

A young adult insider looks to the future.

Mark Regier

There is danger in the move toward integration—not in what might happen to the General Conference and the Mennonite Church denominations but in what almost certainly will not happen.

I am one of only a handful of GC church bureaucrats who falls into the young adult category. In the last four years I have discovered an often ignored but steadily growing rift that may well threaten our future as a denomination.

The hidden danger of integration is that all the hype and hysteria, the rhetoric and politics, are obscuring a problem far more profound than the structural or theological merger of two denominations. This problem is the growing chasm between the priorities and perspectives of the current leadership generation (generally people ages 50 to 70) and those of the Baby Boomers and Busters (ages 20 to mid-40s).

The church today, and particularly the church of tomorrow, is different from the church of the 1950s and 1960s, yet it is often run (locally and denominationally) on assumptions and priorities that have changed little in the last 40 years. More often than not, direction seems based on a pining for "a church that was" rather than on an acceptance of what is and the envisioning of what may be. Tragically, the integration process has spent much more energy merging two old systems than dreaming and promoting a fresh and functional new one. Half a Studebaker plus half an Edsel still gets you one old car.

"Speaking out" and other articles do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

When speaking with other Mennonite young adults (Baby Busters) about integration, I am amazed at their attitude. "Why didn't it happen yesterday?" is a frequent comment. Upon further questioning, their rationale tends to fall along two lines: (1) The differences between the two denominations are insignificant—you can chalk this up to naiveté or clarity of vision—and (2) the actions/positions of denominations are unimportant and have no impact on "real life."

Taken seriously, rationale number 2 is alarming. What are the implications if those who represent the future of the Mennonite/Anabaptist faith view its supporting and guiding structures as irrelevant? I find this attitude equally prevalent among the older (but similarly disenfranchised) Baby Boomer generation.

How are priorities being set for our denomination? Who is setting them? And who is being listened to? The decision-making power at the denominational level in the General Conference is held almost exclusively by those over age 50, whether staff or commission members. This is also reflected at the area conference and local level in who attends conferences, who holds key positions and whose programs and agenda are funded first.

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We should give as much time to the merging and understanding of generational priorities as has been given to the possible merger of two denominations.

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Congregational input and feedback are generally gathered through mechanisms that favor the traditional response patterns of the leadership generation such as church mailbox surveys, Sunday school class discussions and congregational meetings. The result is that Baby Boomers and Busters are relatively faceless, voiceless populations, and few of their concerns or priorities for the church are incorporated.

What does this say about the plans we are laying for the General Conference, integration or no integration? Are we preparing for the future or enshrining the past? During March's Council of Commissions in Newton, Kan., our church representatives faced (and managed to postpone again) the daunting task of reprioritizing the work and budgets of the General Conference. This event—when it occurs—will be the first time a conscious, priority-setting effort has been undertaken in decades. If the process is to provide for the future of our faith, it will require courage, leadership and vision.

To test the critical nature of this hidden danger, I ask those in the leadership generation (50 years or older) the following: How many of your children (or those of your peers) are attending a Mennonite church as an adult? How many of your grandchildren will do so? How many of your children respond to "church" as you did? And, most important of all, do you know why? The answers to these questions tell us, perhaps more than we want to admit, about the need for priorities that reflect multigenerational perspectives.

We should give as much time to the merging and understanding of generational priorities as has been given to the possible merger of two denominations. Our future depends on our handling both issues with openness and vision. We dare not create a church catering strictly to the perceptions and needs of the current generation-in-power. The church must not become irrelevant or alienating to generations that follow. Our actions must reflect the entire body of believers—the church's future as well as its past and present. You cannot pass on a heritage or a faith if there is no one there to pass it on to.

Mark Regier is director of marketing for Faith & Life Press, publisher for the General Conference Mennonite Church, and is actively involved in young adult ministry at Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan.

AMBS • window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Focus

Why a Mennonite seminary education

A testimony by Peter B. Wiebe

I enrolled at Goshen Biblical Seminary in 1949 and have now served four Mennonite congregations. My ministry was greatly enhanced by the years in a Mennonite seminary. My father served as pastor with an eighth grade education and I saw him struggle to be a faithful Mennonite pastor without the advantages afforded me. He would have given a lot to have my opportunities.

At seminary I explored my calling and my convictions deepened. I acquired the pastoral skills and was personally affirmed by faculty and students in this vocational choice.

These were formative years which gave me insights into the Scriptures and helped me discover my heritage of faith. Church leaders teaching at the seminary helped with an awareness of how I might fit into pastoral ministry in the Mennonite context.

The summer following seminary I served as an intern with Roy S. Koch in St. Jacobs, Ont. This experience proved to be invaluable. I preached in a congregational setting, visited in many homes, taught Summer Bible School, assisted in funerals and weddings. Here my confidence grew, again I was affirmed and I was counseled. I felt the challenge, and my pastoral identity became clearer.

I pursued Clinical Pastoral Education at Wesley Hospital in Wichita. With the skills acquired there I have had the satisfaction of assisting fifteen younger aspiring pastoral candidates. Thinking theologically about experiences while in training has become a most profitable way of learning.

Through the more than forty years of preaching, teaching and pastoral care, I have been grateful for the Mennonite context of seminary. (Earlier I had considered two non-Mennonite seminaries.) In the congregations where I have served, I have been able to help clarify the Mennonite identity and celebrate our heritage.

Richard A. Kauffman

It is never easy to respond to the question: "Who are the Mennonites?" The caller with that question yesterday was a student at Arizona State University. For her study, she needed an in-depth interview with a Mennonite pastor. Again I thanked God for my seminary education.

Our churches have experienced all types of crises in the past decades. I have frequently returned to the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary for refresher courses, for consultation with the professors. Without these theological peers, I would have experienced a loneliness in charting the course for the future of Mennonite congregational life.

Our Mennonite seminaries have remained small. This allows the professors to be closer to students. I always found professors to be vulnerable, ready to help me find the practical congregational applications. They wanted to know how I had bridged the gap from classroom to congregational life.

As our Mennonite congregations seek to be faithful to Christ, we will need to have pastoral leadership that is well established in our unique history and Mennonite theology.

So from the base of my own self-identity shaped at the seminary, I can enlarge the dialogue with persons from other traditions. Our Mennonite seminaries have helped in creating a stronger denominational setting.

Peter B. Wiebe is pastor of Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Arizona. He served for fourteen years as a member of the Goshen Biblical Seminary board of overseers and helped in bringing GBS together with Mennonite Biblical Seminary to form AMBS.

Inside

"Growing" new church leaders

AMBS revamps Master of Divinity plan of study

President's Window

AMBS Panorama

Congregational internships:

"Growing" new church leaders

AMBS will launch a new plan of study for the Master of Divinity degree in fall. One component–the Minister in the Church course–is being tested this school year. Supervised by experienced pastors, students serve as interns in congregations.

Harold and Ruth Yoder

John Schrock's involvement at Prairie Street Mennonite Church in the Minister in the Church program has been a natural process. He had been a part of the congregation since beginning seminary, so he was acquainted with the congregation, and we with him. John and his wife, Missy, had already begun serving as youth group advisers. So the Minister in the Church program just meant a broadening of John's ministry involvement to include visitation, worship leading, preaching, and teaching age groups other than youth. It also meant meeting with Elders and Conference Area Council, and becoming acquainted with some of the behind-the-scenes tasks of the pastor.

Why did we choose to participate in this program? Primarily for John's benefit—giving him a chance to try out gifts in a real church setting, to evaluate his readiness for ministry now or sometime later in life, to develop confidence in the gifts he has. For some time the elders and pastors at Prairie Street had expressed eagerness to be involved in "growing" needed church leaders.

But Prairie Street has also benefitted. John has been an important part of our visitation program. He will preach five times during the year. He has taught Sunday School for various ages. He has continued much appreciated leadership with the youth of the church.

We wish John God's richest blessings in his continued preparation for ministry.

Harold and Ruth Yoder are pastors of Prairie Street Mennonite Church in Elkhart.

J. Tyler Klassen

AMBS student John Schrock talks with Ruth and Harold Yoder, pastors at Prairie Street Mennonite Church, about his experiences in the Minister in the Church course.

John Schrock

In the Minister in the Church course I have participated in preaching, teaching, worship leading and visitation.

The class is designed as a supervised experience in ministry, which means that I am directly accountable to my supervisors—pastors Harold and Ruth Yoder and professor Erick Sawatzky—for my learning. However, I set my own learning goals and work to achieve them; the supervisors are there only to assist me in understanding and learning from my experience.

In this model of learning the congregation and the other members of the class play an important role also. They are involved in giving me feedback on their perception of me as a ministering person.

The supervised experience in ministry is unlike most of the rest of seminary education. Here we "do" ministry and then reflect on what we have done. I have found this experience-oriented learning to be very helpful. Not only do we reflect on what happened but on how we as ministering people experienced what happened, and on how this affected us. Through this process I have learned a lot about what it means to be a minister in the church of today.

John Schrock from Wayland, Iowa, will graduate from AMBS in May.

AMBS revamps Master of Divinity plan of study

1. *Primary program*

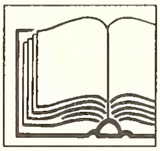
Preparation for pastoral ministry in a variety of settings

Continuing emphases: Theology, ethics, mission, church history, worship

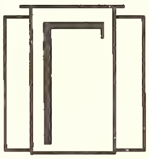
Strengthened areas of study:

- Spiritual formation and growth . . .

- Biblical studies . . . .

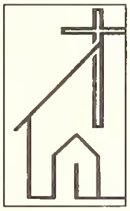


- Preaching . . . .



- Pastoral Care . . . .

- Required internships . . . .



2. *Pastoral care and counseling concentration*

Preparation to counsel people struggling with life experiences and questions of faith

3. *Theological studies concentration*

For people pursuing a teaching ministry or further graduate study.

AMBS continues to offer the ***Master of Arts in Peace Studies*** *(MAPS) and* ***Master of Arts in Theological Studies*** *(MATS) degrees. The MATS program offers five concentrations: biblical studies, Christian education, Christian spirituality, church history, and theology and ethics.*

Because the intention of members of our congregation is to continue to be a Mennonite church, we placed a high prioirity on finding a lead pastor trained at AMBS—someone to teach and preach the scriptures from an Anabaptist perspective and to lead with an understanding of the Mennonite faith, history and witness.

Evelyn Bertsche,
Mennonite Church of Normal

Shift focus in teaching Bible courses

A shift in how the Bible is studied will accompany the new curriculum for the Master of Divinity program this fall.

The way Bible courses are taught will mesh with the emphasis on ministry, whether that is in a congregation, or in teaching, pastoral counseling, church planting or other setting.

The shift moves from one way of studying the Bible—exegesis—to a different approach—exposition. Exegesis focuses on detailed study of the text, while exposition involves a wider process of applying the text to life. Perry Yoder, professor of Old Testament, says, "The process begins with study of the Bible in Hebrew and Greek and ends with an application for ministry."

"We're moving from picking the Bible apart to understanding the Bible as a whole," says Mary Schertz, associate professor of New Testament.

The approach involves three steps: ask, assess, and apply. In the asking, the student reads the Bible carefully within its historical and social context. Then the student assesses the passage by asking what is its significance for the present. The student then applies the passage in a helpful way in a ministry setting.

–*June Mears*

President's Window

What do we at AMBS believe theological education is all about?

Over the last few years we have carefully reevaluated this question. We have agreed that theological education at AMBS will start with the church's identity and mission, rather than with the nature of theology as an intellectual inquiry or with a professional vision of ministry.

We believe the Christian church is called to proclaim and signify God's reign on earth through the power of the Holy Spirit. And the purpose of theological education and Christian ministry is to serve the church and its calling.

Our new plan of study for the Master of Divinity degree is designed to educate men and women for pastoral ministries in a variety of settings. Whether one serves God as a pastor of a congregation, evangelist, chaplain, pastoral counselor or teacher of the church, the ***pastoral*** role includes representing God's presence and reign to others. Of crucial importance is the ability to listen carefully to others and especially to the Spirit of God through Jesus Christ.

Education for pastoral ministry, therefore, involves attention not only to growth in theological understanding and abilities in ministry, but also to developing character, sense of call, pastoral identity and spiritual depth.

The program seeks to nurture pastors who can inspire and lead the church in its ministry by encouraging:

1. commitment to the church as a missionary community;
2. ability to draw on the Scripture as the primary standard for life and thought;
3. competency in relational and practical arts and skills for pastoral ministries;
4. moral integrity in both personal and public life; and
5. a style of leadership which focuses on empowering other believers for their ministries.

Other items in this issue of *AMBS Window* introduce more specific details about the new plan of study and other programs at AMBS. Throughout all of these, we begin and end with a commitment to serving the calling of the church to proclaim God's reign...and with confidence in the sustaining and transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

Gayle Gerber Koontz, AMBS dean
Guest writer for "President's Window"

The World of the Bible

Take an audiovisual tour of the lands of the Bible with Jake Elias, professor of New Testament, in AMBS's fall weekend intensive course.

The two-credit-hour course meets three weekends at AMBS , Sept. 16-17, Oct. 21-22, and Dec. 2-3, Friday evenings, and Saturday mornings and afternoons.

AMBS Panorama

AMBS Board honors two

The AMBS Board, meeting Feb. 10-12, named Henry Poettcker of Winnipeg, Man., President Emeritus of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, honoring him for his twelve years as professor and MBS president from 1978-1990.

The AMBS board also granted Mary H. Schertz continuing employment (tenure) and named her associate professor of New Testament. She has taught at AMBS since 1988.

Request a new catalog

The 1994-96 academic catalog, filled with quotes and photos, gives a glimpse into AMBS through the eyes of people who have studied or are studying at AMBS.

The "Open Doors" catalog gives details about the Master of Arts in Peace Studies and Master of Arts in Theological Studies degrees along with details about the new Master of Divinity plan of study. Financial aid, housing, spiritual formation resources and other vital information also is included.

Request a copy from Steve Fath, director of recruitment.

Don and Elsie Steelberg are campus guests

"There is a danger in engaging the almighty; you may be changed," Don Steelberg told AMBS students and faculty, as he reflected on the story of Jacob's all-night wrestling with God. Don and Elsie Steelberg were Theological Center Guests at AMBS the first week of March, speaking in chapel services, forum and classes. Don is pastor of Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.; and Elsie is a psychiatrist at Prairie View in Newton.

Prayer requests

Pray for students and congregations involved in the Minister in the Church course *(see page 2)* as each helps the other to grow: John Schrock, Prairie Street Mennonite Church; Eric Deckert, Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart; Kevin Farmwald, North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee; Randy Grossman, Faith Mennonite Church, Goshen; Glenn Leinbach, Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Pray for students who are completing studies and will participate in commissioning and commencement at AMBS, May 19-20. Ask God to guide them as they take this step in their preparation for ministry.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

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Consulting editor: Richard A. Kauffman

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News

Missionaries firebombed in South Africa

Newton, Kan.—Firebombs hit the house of Gary and Jean Isaac, missionaries in Transkei, South Africa, March 29. The Isaacs reported minimal damage, since the bombs missed the windows and landed in the yard.

"Our house was 'petrol bombed' at 1:45 this morning," said a fax message that day from the Isaacs. "We were awakened by dogs barking and a crash. By the time we got to the (back) door, bits of rubber from car tires were alight on the grass and the walkway between our back door and the outbuilding."

The fax reported that at least five Coke bottles filled with rubber pieces, petrol, matches and dirt came over the back wall. The home of Australian missionaries two houses down was also attacked.

Carrying on: *Although shaken by the bombing, the Isaacs are continuing their work. After finding someone to watch their house, the Isaacs flew to their South Africa Coordinating Group meeting the following week.*

"We're shaken and uncertain but trying to carry on as usual," the Isaacs wrote.

Leona Schrag, assistant executive secretary of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, says she believes the bombing came not because of the Isaacs' work but because all whites are targets in Transkei. AIMM sponsors the Isaacs' work.

The Isaacs had been warned in the past that they could be in danger because they are white. When black activist Chris Hani was killed Easter Saturday last year, the Isaacs were warned not to travel by road and instead traveled by plane to meetings. In October 1993 five black children were killed while they slept, frustrating racial tension.

Because of the firebombing, the Isaacs decided to travel to their April South Africa Coordinating Group meeting by plane rather than by car. But they plan to continue their work.

"They have known that they need to be careful," Schrag says. "As we get closer to the election, there could be more tension and therefore more violence." National elections are slated for April 27. *Larry Penner*

Wichita '95 stays put

Kansas City, Mo. (GCMC/MC)—Fourteen representatives of the Mennonite Church (MC) and the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) met here April 4 and agreed that the 1995 joint denominational convention should be in Wichita, Kan., as originally planned.

The group met for seven hours to consider Kansas City as an alternative site after learning that the large Century Plaza Hotel in Wichita may not be available for use at the joint conference.

While some preferred the Kansas City facilities, all agreed to support the convention in Wichita. The group recognized that the Wichita location presents challenges in program planning and shuttling but opted for the benefits of Wichita. They expect the proximity of Mennonites to boost attendance and participation by volunteers. They also recognized that many program plans already in place assume Wichita as the site.

The 14 people who met April 4 included representatives from the GC and MC denominations, the GC Western District Conference and the MC South Central Conference. Convention planners anticipate that up to 8,000 Mennonites from across Canada and the United States will attend Wichita '95.

Inside the news

Central District moves toward integration / p. 14

New curriculum now available / p. 15

MDS responds to tornadoes / p. 16

Winnipeg church works through split / p. 16

Retirement means beginning of volunteerism / p. 17

Jacob Luitjens, imprisoned for life in 1992 in The Hague, Netherlands, for wartime collaboration with the Nazis, will be freed in March 1995. The Dutch government announced March 10 that it had reduced the sentence, based in part on Luitjens' age and on the fact that sentences in similar cases have been reduced. Luitjens, 74, was sentenced in absentia in his home country for helping Nazis capture Dutch resistance fighters during World War II. He had fled to Paraguay after the war and entered Canada in 1961. He built a new life as a botany professor at the University of British Columbia and joined First United Mennonite Church in Vancouver. In 1992 he was stripped of his Canadian citizenship and deported. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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For the first time Mennonite and Brethren in Christ number more in the Southern Hemisphere than in the Northern, according to Mennonite World Conference. Churches in the south (Africa, Asia, Australia and Latin America) top 519,000 members, while churches in the north (Europe and North America) report 455,000 members. The United States reports the most members, 298,781, followed by Zaire (136,200) and Canada (117,932). Baptized members of the 194 organized bodies in 61 countries now exceed 973,000, up from 856,600 in 171 bodies in 60 countries in 1990. Zairian membership rose from 112,900 to 136,200, and Ethiopian membership rose from 10,000 to 50,000. (*Courier*)

The Johnson House, a property of the Germantown Mennonite Church Corporation, has received a $26,100 matching grant from the Institute of Museum Services to research its history and assess its collection. The house, built by a Dutch Quaker in Philadelphia's Germantown section, dates to 1768.

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First Mennonite Church in Lima, Ohio, a congregation of the General Conference Mennonite Church, has begun fully integrated programming with Northside Mennonite Church, a Mennonite Church congregation. The churches now worship together in the Northside building but maintain their independent identities while they sort out other integration questions.

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***Fellowship* magazine documents nonviolence at work in a Saskatchewan hospital. It reports, "Whenever a doctor on staff there dumps on a nurse inappropriately, the nursing station sends out over the intercom a 'Code Pink,' and all nurses able to do so descend on the spot, surround the doctor, hold hands and stare him down. ... After using this tactic only three times, the situation corrected itself. This is official hospital policy, conducted with the blessings of the administration." (*Salt*)**

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Newton, Kan.,-area churches sponsored a gun buy-back April 1, Good Friday. Offering $40 per working firearm, the group paid $1,800 to buy 45 guns. The guns will be melted down. "We realize this is probably more of a symbolic effort," said Steve Schmidt, pastor at New Creation Fellowship, a General Conference Mennonite congregation. "It probably won't take guns off the street, but if we can get them out of the home, that will be helpful." (*The Wichita Eagle*)

CDC takes integration steps

Goshen, Ind.—Central District Conference delegates here March 24-26 tacitly endorsed a report that could lead to joint General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) conference ministry in the next year.

The report, brought by the East Central States Inter-Mennonite Council, proposes "the creation of joint ministry areas, each served by a staff minister." Geographic areas of 30 to 50 congregations would be served by a regional conference minister who could be GC or MC. The plan could become an interim step toward a centralized integrated conference or several new regional integrated conferences.

The report brought little discussion, and when CDC president Barry Schmell, Middlebury, Ind., said he would interpret silence as a go-ahead on the plan if conference leaders chose to move in the next year, no one voiced opposition.

Ruth Naylor of the GC/MC Integration Exploration Committee, and Jim Schrag, chair of the East Central States Inter-Mennonite Council, led discussion sessions on integration. Naylor, a pastor at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio, characterized the MC church as moving more carefully and deliberately toward integration, while she said GCs are "in the habit of moving more quickly."

Schrag, pastor at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio, a dual-conference church, said MCs are moving more slowly because the Mennonite Church itself is moving through a difficult transition from centralized control toward congregationalism. Anxiety accompanies that change.

"The Mennonite Church is moving toward a style of church that General Conference people have had for a long time," he said. He said that as the MC heirarchy loosens, "latent congregationalism begins to flower."

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'The Mennonite Church is moving toward a style of church that General Conference people have had for a long time.'

Jim Schrag

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While GC members' concern is being engulfed by numbers, he said, MC members worry that their church has already moved too far too fast in embracing congregationalism.

He characterized the difference between MCs and GCs with a metaphor. For MCs, he said, the church is a glass of clear water that can be contaminated by one drop of ink. For GCs, the church is a mosaic of pieces that "need

Larry Penner

Seeing ministry in a new way: *A clown named Shalom helps Willard Roth, chair of the CDC ministerial committee, talk with delegates about the work of his committee.*

each other but can be different."

Identity crisis: Jack Suderman, a Mennonite mission worker in Colombia, spoke three times on the identity of the church. He called delegates to let memories inform the present, reminding them that Mennonites have been refugees and pilgrims who have valued simplicity and solidarity and have worked to be a reconciling community. "The gospel calls us to worldliness," he said, calling delegates to mission in the world.

He characterized the North American attitude as pessimistic resignation, and called faith the solution: "Faith is the foundation of hope." He said, "The church is where God's politics are put into action ... where God's economics are realized."

Budget: Church contributions to CDC for 1993 represented an $8,000 increase above giving for 1992. That figure was still under the $204,500 that CDC had budgeted as church contributions for 1993. For the year, however, CDC ended in the black. Delegates adopted a 1994 budget of $281,952 that calls for $199,000 in church contributions.

Delegates also

- celebrated a new book, *Walking Together in Faith: The Central District Conference 1957-1990*, edited by Elaine Sommers Rich;
- were introduced to Glen Horner, who will begin June 1 as conference minister for western CDC and for the Illinois Conference of the MC.

Next year CDC will meet March 30-April 1 at Normal, Ill. In 1996 it will meet jointly with the Ohio Conference of the Mennonite Church at Bluffton, Ohio. *Larry Penner*

New curriculum rolls off press

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Vivian Wiebe, Rosemary, Alta., is one of many Mennonite educators eager to use *Jubilee: God's Good News*, a new Anabaptist curriculum for children ages two through eighth grade now available for use this fall.

Jubilee is the first cooperative Anabaptist children's curriculum since the *Foundation Series for Children*, published in 1977. "The old curriculum was good. But our whole society has changed so much since then," says Wiebe. "*Jubilee* addresses current issues like single-parent families."

Wiebe thinks that the colorful format of the curriculum "will help us compete with what kids see in everyday life through the media." She also appreciates the solid biblical base of the lessons.

The Anabaptist message is also loud and clear in *Jubilee*, says Donna Driedger, Osler, Sask. "My conviction is that we can't count on the people down the street to tell our children our story. We have to be clear about what our values are," she says.

Hands-on activities: The Mennonite educators also like the fact that the curriculum offers plenty of options for hands-on activities. "*Jubilee* is more interactive. It is up-to-date with current educational philosophy," says Nancy Ellis, Covina, Calif.

"The children are not expected to sit at a desk with a pencil," says Driedger. "Studies have shown that children learn much better when they are actively involved."

The curriculum uses storytelling and "wondering" questions as two of its primary methods. "Instead of the teachers saying this is the moral of the story, the children are encouraged to ask questions that they can apply to their own lives," says Ellis.

"Children are taught not what to think but how to think," says Driedger.

In addition to being designed as interactive, the curriculum is also intended to be more flexible. "Churches need fluidity," says Ellis, who is involved in an urban church with primarily African-American members. Too often, she says, past curricula could not be adapted to a cross-cultural and/or urban setting. She says this is not the case with *Jubilee*.

Ellis thinks *Jubilee* will work well in large and small churches because it is divided into four age groups instead of grades. This allows churches the option of combining several grades together. The *Jubilee Celebrations Book* also offers the chance for intergenerational activities.

Jubilee is a cooperative effort of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Brethren in Christ, Church of the Brethren, Friends United Meeting and Mennonite Brethren. The curriculum has a three-year cycle; each year is divided into four quarters.

Jubilee Sample Kits are also available for $34.95 (U.S.) each from Faith & Life

Menno Simons Historical Library at Eastern Mennonite College and Seminary plans to offer an annual scholarship for researchers (excluding current undergraduate students). The Harry Anthony Brunk Scholars' Award will provide funds to allow time in the library for research leading to publication or other creative production. The initial award will be $2,000. Contact the library at EMC&S, Harrisonburg, VA 22801, (703) 432-4177.

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Eastern Mennonite College and Seminary will change its name to "Eastern Mennonite University" Aug. 22. The Board of Trustees voted unanimously March 22 to endorse the change. A news release listed three reasons for the change: "to consolidate and unify" the school's undergraduate, seminary, Lancaster campus and new graduate programs, "to convey breadth" because the words "Mennonite" and "seminary" suggest religious education only, and "to offer clarity internationally," since the word "university" is better understood than "college" or "seminary" overseas.

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Kauffman Museum, North Newton, Kan., is endorsing an Arizona-based furniture maker to craft reproductions of Mennonite furniture. The pieces are based on the 1991-92 Kauffman Museum exhibition, "Mennonite Furniture: A Migrant Tradition (1766-1910)." Ed Shamah, president of All Wood Treasures of Tempe, Ariz., learned of the Mennonite furniture tradition when his brother sent him a copy of a book based on the Kauffman Museum exhibit. The museum is the only retailer of the reproductions and adaptations, named the Vistula-Delta Collection, and will receive a percentage from the sales. Shamah donated a table from the collection to the Mid-Kansas Mennonite Central Committee Relief Sale, held April 8-9.

Mennonite Youth Farm, Rosthern, Sask., is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Celebrations will be held June 10-12 at the Youth Farm complex.

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The Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite Church received a $25,000 grant from the Tenth Man program of Mennonite Men at the end of February. Nhien Pham is the pastor of this congregation, which has about 120 participants. Mennonite Men is a part of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

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Philip Thomson, piano instructor at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ont., recently signed a recording contract with Naxos Records to produce three compact discs of Franz Liszt piano music in July. The recordings are part of a project to record the complete piano works of Liszt. Thomson will contribute a complete set of Liszt's *Poetic and Religious Harmonies*, the complete waltzes including all *Mephisto Waltzes, Valses Oubliées* and operatic paraphrases.

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Father Elias Chacour, founder of the Prophet Elias Community College, received the 1994 World Methodist Peace Award on March 10. The World Methodist Council honored Father Chacour, a Melkite (Greek Catholic) priest and author of *Blood Brothers* and *We Belong to the Land*, for his work of reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis in the Holy Land. Chacour has been associated with MCC and Mennonite Board of Missions since the 1970s, serving as a resource person for the agencies and for a number of Mennonite tour groups which visited the region. MBM volunteers have served at his school and he has visited North America to speak to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations.

Carla Reimer

Checking it out: *Vivian Wiebe (right), Rosemary, Alta., and Kim Friesen, Edmonton, examine* Jubilee: God's Good News, *a new Anabaptist curriculum for children ages two through eighth grade.*

Press, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (800) 743-2484 or for $48.25 (Can.) each from Faith & Life Press Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781. The kits offer a complete introduction to the curriculum and include materials for use in the fall quarter. They also contain a coupon for use in the first *Jubilee* order and a training video for teachers. Additional information and a price list can also be obtained from Faith & Life Press. *Carla Reimer*

MDS plans tornado relief

Akron, Pa.(MCC)-- Mennonite Disaster Service leaders are surveying tornado-ravaged areas of the southeastern United States following tornadoes that touched down in a five-state area in March, killing more than 40 people.

MDS leaders Ottis Mast, of Macon, Miss., and Lloyd Swartzendruber, of Montezuma, Ga., traveled to hard-hit areas near Piedmont, Ala., and in northern Georgia to assess damage.

MDS leaders in North and South Carolina are also mapping out where to initiate cleanup efforts in their states.

In a March 29 phone call, Mast reported that in Piedmont the tornado devastated a swath 20 miles long and up to a mile wide. He saw houses ripped from their foundations. "There will be a lot of work," Mast said.

For the latest information on the tornado response, call the MDS central office in Akron, Pa., at (717) 859-3889 or Region I Director Paul Brubacher at (215) 286-5298.

Donations for the Southeast tornado response efforts, as well as for ongoing work in the Midwest flood response and Los Angeles earthquake reconstruction, are welcome. Volunteers will be needed during the spring and summer.

MDS closed its Homestead, Fla., office on March 31, and may move vehicles and supplies from Homestead to other areas in the Southeast.

Winnipeg church processes a split

Winnipeg (*Mennonite Reporter*)—After a painful struggle, Home Street Mennonite Church has split into two groups. Jan. 30 was the last Sunday the two groups met. On Feb. 7, the dissenting group of about 70 people met in their newly acquired home at 2764 Ness Ave. with a sign outside identifying them as the Good News Mennonite Church.

Bob Pauls, pastor of the 260-member church for the last 10 of its 36 years, admits the tensions were always part of the church. "It was probably at least 10 to 12 years in the making," he says.

The first major tremor was felt at the January 1993 annual meeting, when the members voted on whether they wished Home Street to belong to the three conferences (Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, Conference of Mennonites in Canada and the General Conference Mennonite Church) and Mennonite Central Committee.

Sixty-one percent of the vote was in favor of keeping conference ties. But since the church constitution requires a two-thirds majority, the issue remained unresolved and the decision-making process impaired.

In March 1993, after a series of long church meetings, the church decided to set aside the next 18 months for a process called "a vision for Home Street." By September 1993 they had isolated three key issues: biblical interpretation, the role of women in ministry and conference affiliation.

On the first weekend of December 1993, the congregation met with a professional facilitator, Dennis Koehn, for an intense three-day session. Members agreed that any decisions made would be binding for the next two years.

After some discussion the statement on the Bible was passed. The role of women in ministry and conference affiliation were more problematic.

On Dec. 16, 1993, eight couples who met for regular Bible study decided that they could no longer remain part of the church. Through an announcement in the Home Street bulletin they invited others who were dissatisfied to come to a meeting on Dec. 29, 1993.

At this meeting they began to organize into committees and look for another facility.

The split has meant uncertainty. "You're really not sure who is staying and who is going," says Pauls. "It leaves a sizable hole."

Pauls feels there are less visible factors. "We are using theological issues to frame why we're separating, but there are many other things.

"If you have a good relationship with another person you can disagree on theological issues and not have that divide you," Pauls says. "But when you don't … trust that person, then a difference in theology can divide." *Wilma Derksen*

Retirement offers chance to volunteer

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Erlene and Bob Unruh, rural Newton, always wanted to do voluntary service. But before they retired, the Unruhs found it difficult to get away from their jobs to do "something substantial."

So when they retired last July, the Unruhs, members of Tabor Mennonite Church, rural Newton, didn't waste time following one of their lifelong dreams. "We waited during all our working years. We were ready to jump in," says Erlene. For their first project, the Unruhs helped dry fruit for Mennonite Central Committee. Then, last August through October, they served at Camp Friedenswald near Cassopolis, Mich.

Their most recent voluntary service "adventure" was spent helping a Hispanic Mennonite church in Miami through the Abraham and Sarah Caravan project March 2-10. The project, initiated by the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church, helps put into action the General Conference's 1992 resolution to plant and support new churches.

The Unruhs and six other caravan volunteers painted the meeting space for the Iglesia Menonita Encuentro de Renovacion and worked on several members' homes.

"They [the church members] were so gracious. It often seemed like we were the recipients," says Erlene.

The Iglesia Menonita Encuentro de Renovacion started in October 1992 as the result of door-to-door visitation. Currently about 60 people participate in the church.

Adela Lopez decided to "take the risk" and participate in the Abraham and Sarah Caravan while she was visiting her family in Hesston, Kan. She is a member of Comunidad de Fe in Chicago.

It was the first time she had worked on a volunteer project with Anglos. "Even though we didn't speak the same language, we could understand each other because as Christians we have one Spirit," she says.

"There is no age limit on helping others. Everything is possible with love," Lopez adds.

For more information about the project contact Lester and Winifred Ewy, 3202 Royer West Drive, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-2965. *Carla Reimer*

Risk taker: *Adela Lopez at work in Miami*

Marco Guete

In its first month of operation, the Brady law, a national five-day waiting period and background check for buying a gun in the United States, has prevented at least 1,605 people from buying handguns, including fugitives and felons convicted of armed robbery, murder and manslaughter, according to preliminary statistics from 15 states and cities. (*The Wichita Eagle*)

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"Peace Theology and Relating to People of Other Faiths" is the theme for the Peace Theology Colloquium to be held June 17-19 at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa. Speakers include Gayle Gerber Koontz, J. Denny Weaver, Lawrence Hart, Gordon Kaufman, Aruna Gnanadason and John E. Toews. The colloquium is sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Peace and Justice Ministries. For more information and to register, contact Debra Gingerich, Peace and Justice Ministries, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17601-0500, (717) 859-3889.

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Chicago Urban Project, a new short-term urban learning and service program, will welcome its first participants in May. The participants will work with Chicago-area Mennonite churches in church repair and renovation and will relate to social service agencies. CUP is a joint project of three Mennonite agencies—Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes, the Illinois Mennonite Conference of the Mennonite Church, and the Central District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Churches, schools, youth groups, Sunday school classes and college and intergenerational groups may schedule a CUP experience by contacting staffers Kathy and Ken Roth at 4733 S. Lamon, Chicago, IL 60638, (312) 735-5336, or MCC Great Lakes, Box 82, Kidron, OH 44636, (216) 857-7721.

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Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

Record

MINISTERS

Brad Carlson, youth pastor for Northern District Conference, was named 1994 South Dakota Jaycee Outstanding Young Religious Leader. Carlson is also assistant director of Swan Lake Christian Camp and a volunteer at Freeman (S.D.) Academy.

Scott Miller will be associate pastor at Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship beginning this summer.

David Wiebe began as interim pastor in March at Grace Church, Brandon, Man.

WORKERS

Trevor De Ryck, Winnipeg, began a two-year Mennonite Voluntary Service term March 1 as an assistant manager with Denver Community Development.

Daagya Dick, First Church, San Francisco, began a 19-month Mennonite Voluntary Service term March 1 as a community organizer with the West Side Citizens Organization, St. Paul, Minn.

Steve Perry, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., was named Counselor of the Year by Mennonite Mutual Aid. Perry works in MMA's office in Hesston, Kan.

Erica Thiessen, Commission on Overseas Mission and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission worker in Botswana, arrived in British Columbia in February for a six-month North America Assignment.

De Ryck

Dick

Twenty-five years: *The Commission on Overseas Mission thanked Henry and Tina Dirks, Virgil, Ont., for their approximately 25 years of service in Zaire with COM and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. At a March 12-14 meeting COM executive secretary Erwin Rempel (right) gave the Dirkses a plaque in recognition of their work in Kinshasa with CEDI, an international, interdenominational organization that produces literature for all Protestant groups in Zaire. Henry and Tina are members of Bethany Mennonite Church in Virgil.*

Eastern Mennonite College & Seminary has the following position open: **grant writer** (half time)**/associate director of development** (half time). This is a 12-months, full-time position. As grant writer, responsible to write proposals and build relationships between EMC&S and key foundations/corporations. As associate director of development, the responsibility is to generate financial resources for EMC&S through donor contacts in a specific area.

The qualified candidate will possess a bachelor's degree. A master's degree preferred. The selected candidate will have experience and success in grant writing and fund raising. Knowledge of Mennonite Church structure, policies and institutions beneficial. Must have excellent writing, computer and communication skills. Must be able to cultivate donor relationships and be available to travel. Application deadline: **May 9**. Minorities encouraged to apply.

If interested, please contact **EMC&S, Personnel Office, (703) 432-4108**.

Lombard Mennonite Church, Lombard, Ill., seeks **youth minister**. Mature, self-motivated individual eager to provide leadership and nurturing love for our high school youth. Strong organizational and relational skills a must. Experience with youth preferred. Position available July 1.

Submit resumé and references **by April 30 to Carol Bohnert, Lombard Mennonite Church, 528 E. Madison, Lombard, IL 60148, (708) 495-0132, fax (708) 627-9893.**

Canadian Mennonite Bible College invites applications for a **communications and alumni relations coordinator** (half-time). Duties include preparation of promotional and recruitment materials, news releases for the college and serving as a staff person in alumni relations. Complete job description available on request. (Call Anita at 204-888-6781.) The position is available Aug. 1.

Apply in writing (with resumé and references) **by May 15** to **John H. Neufeld, President, CMBC, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.**

The Other Side, a Christian magazine of peace and justice issues, seeks a full-time **assistant publisher** to conduct financial management and planning as well as provide support services. Experience in magazine publishing and/or financial management desirable. Excellent benefits. Deadline for applications: **May 15**, later inquiries appropriate.

Contact **Hiring Team,** ***The Other Side*****, 300 W. Apsley, Philadelphia, PA 19144, (215) 849-2178.**

Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., is seeking a **full-time, associate-level pastor** whose role in a three-person pastoral team will emphasize ministry to youth, young adults and young families through all areas of ministry, including youth and young adult program development and support, preaching, worship planning, teaching and counseling/visitation. Seminary degree and service experience desirable. Beginning date in summer or fall 1994.

Send letter of inquiry and resumé or Ministerial Leadership Information Form to **Doug Penner, Pastoral Search Committee, Bethel College Mennonite Church, 2600 College Ave., North Newton, KS 67117.** Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled.

Director, long-term stewardship cultivation project. This is a new cooperative program sponsored by the General Conference Mennonite and Mennonite churches; it is being funded by MMA, GCMC, MC and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. The office will be located in Elkhart, Ind.

The candidate should have experience in stewardship education and a background in theological studies; financial development work also helpful. Proven administrative skills, familiarity with sponsoring Mennonite denominations, commitment to Mennonite/Anabaptist values, good communication skills and willingness to travel are also important.

The position is available immediately and is projected as a full-time position at least through 1998.

Please respond **by June 1** to **Stanley Kropf, 421 S. 2nd St., Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516, (219) 294-7131** for additional information.

Freeman Academy invites applications for a full-time **administrator.** Must have secondary principal certificate or be willing to pursue this endorsement. Freeman Academy, a member of the Mennonite Secondary Education Council, is a Christian middle school and high school offering grades 5 to 12. Starting date: **July 1.**

To apply or receive more information, contact **Freeman Academy Search Committee, Everett Waltner, Chair, Route 3 Box 32A, Freeman, SD 57029, (605) 925-7766.**

Positions open at **Freeman Academy** for 1994-95:

1. **Bible teacher and campus pastor**, full time
2. **Development director**, part time
3. **Spanish teacher**, part time

All positions open until filled. Freeman Academy is a Christian school, grades 5 to 12, affiliated with the General Conference Mennonite Church.

To apply, send letter and credentials to **Leroy Saner, Principal, Freeman Academy, Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029, (605) 925-4237.**

Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa., is seeking an **assistant pastor** on a full-time basis. Work will have a strong emphasis on youth but will include visiting, preaching, etc.

For details, contact **Pastor Gary Stenson, 630 York Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446, or call (215) 855-7718** between 7 a.m. and noon (Eastern time) Monday and Tuesday.

Bluffton College invites applications for the position of **vice president for fiscal affairs**. Responsibilities include oversight of the fiscal operations of the college, a business office staff of seven and the administrative computer center. Preferred qualifications include an MBA or CPA or its equivalence, higher education administrative experience, knowledge of and experience with information technology, good interpersonal skills, and understanding of and concurrence with the mission and values of Bluffton as a Mennonite church-related liberal arts college. Desired beginning date is **Aug. 1, 1994.**

Submit application, resumé and credentials to **Elmer Neufeld, President, Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817-1196.**

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Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Goshen College announces an opening for **cross-country coach (men and women) and men's track coach.** Part-time position beginning July 1994 for the 1994-95 academic year and beyond. Planning and recruitment work would start earlier. Responsibilities include coaching and developing the cross-country and men's track programs; recruiting quality student athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; planning, organizing and implementing budget and schedule. Master's degree preferred. Instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the collegiate level. Review of applications has begun and will continue until the position is filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resumé and three professional references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.**

Goshen College announces an opening for **head coach of men's basketball.** Part-time position beginning July 1994 for the 1994-95 academic year and beyond. Planning and recruitment work would start earlier. Responsibilities include coaching and developing the men's basketball program; recruiting quality student athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; planning, organizing and implementing budget and schedule. Master's degree preferred. Instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the collegiate level. Review of applications has begun and will continue until the position is filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resumé and three professional references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.**

Chief Executive Officer, Mennonite Board of Education

The directors of the **Mennonite Board of Education** invite nominations and applications for the position of **chief executive officer**. The CEO reports to the 11-member board of education appointed by the Mennonite Church General Assembly and the Mennonite Church General Board. The CEO's appointment will be effective on or about July 1, 1995.

Mennonite Board of Education is responsible to the Mennonite Church for discerning the long-term educational needs of the church and for articulating a vision for institutions and programs that are central to the mission of the church. Through its institutional boards and administrators, MBE operates the churchwide MC colleges and seminaries: Hesston (Kan.) College, Goshen (Ind.) College, Eastern Mennonite College and Seminary (Harrisonburg, Va.) and Goshen Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Ind.). The board also cooperates with Mennonite conference- and locally sponsored schools in furthering the cause of elementary and secondary education in the Mennonite Church. In addition the board furnishes resources for other Mennonite educational centers and programs, including minority leadership education. The central office is in Elkhart, Ind.

Responsibilities of the chief executive officer:
- Provide executive leadership for the staff work of the board (staff size is 4.7 FTE);
- Work with staff on policies, procedures and actions relating to MBE institutions;
- Represent the board in church and church agency contacts;
- Coordinate and further the cause of Mennonite educational programs;
- Provide leadership in developing philosophy and goals for Mennonite education

Qualifications:
Each candidate should be an active member in a Mennonite church, possess a graduate degree, have experience that demonstrates ability for educational leadership and have an understanding of church-sponsored education. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Applicants should submit a current resumé with references and a letter addressing their suitability for the position. Applications and nominations should be sent, preferably **before June 1**, to **MBE Executive Search Committee, c/o Miriam F. Book, 421 S. 2nd St., Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46515-3243.**

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IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED FOR ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION, PLEASE PLACE WITH THIS CARD IN A SEPARATE ENVELOPE AND MAIL TO MCC, 21 SOUTH 12th ST., PO BOX 500, AKRON, PA, 17501-0500.

nsert in Christian Leader, Gospel Herald, Mennonite Weekly Review, Evangelical Visitor, The Mennonite and Mennonite Reporter.

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Bluffton College seeks a **cataloger/circulation librarian** with an MLS from an ALA-accredited institution; two years experience with OCLC and knowledge of AACR2, LCSH and LC classification. The successful candidate will manage all cataloging functions with mostly copy cataloging and supervising one paraprofessional assistant; supervise the circulation system and annual inventory and manage materials processing and catalog maintenance; assist in preparing for library automation and work one night per week while rotating on weekend duty as reference librarian. Full-time, non-tenure track position begins as soon as available but not later than fall 1994. Screening begins May 15. Women and minority applicants are especially welcome.

Reply to **William J. Hawk, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196, (419) 358-3317**.

Bluffton College invites applications for the position of **assistant director of development/director of the annual fund**. Responsibilities include planning and implementation of an annual program of solicitation of financial support for the ongoing operations of the college. Qualifications include a bachelor's degree, preferably in communications or marketing; excellent organizational, interpersonal and motivational skills, and understanding of and concurrence with the mission and values of Bluffton as a Mennonite church-related liberal arts college. Planned starting date is **July 1**.

Submit resumé and credentials to **Development Office, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196**.

Bluffton College seeks an innovative academic leader to serve as **assistant dean for academic affairs**. A doctorate (master's considered) in a discipline represented at the college, excellence in college teaching and experience in administration are highly desirable. Depending upon interests and qualifications the new assistant academic dean will provide leadership to some of the following: a new core general education program, institutional assessment, faculty recruitment and contract reviews, first-year seminar and/or special academic events. Screening begins May 1 with the position to be filled by Aug. 1. Bluffton is a growing and dynamic General Conference Mennonite college attempting to model and articulate Anabaptist Christian perspectives to a diverse student body, a receptive neighboring community and the larger Mennonite church. Women and minority applicants are especially welcome.

Reply to **William Hawk, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817, (419) 358-3317**.

Female residence hall director at **Goshen College**. Will be responsible for the administration of one or more halls housing about 200 students. Responsibilities include representing the Student Development Division in the hall and presenting student needs and concerns to the administration. The director also counsels students, enforces policies and standards, handles discipline and educational programming and selects, trains and supervises student staff. A bachelor's degree and at least two years of related work experience required; a master's degree preferred. Minority people encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Contact **Norman Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526, (219) 535-7539**.

Bluffton College seeks an education generalist with Ph.D. or Ed.D. (master's considered) in **special education or elementary/middle school education** curriculum and instruction. The successful candidate will teach learning disabilities, developmental handicaps and other elementary and secondary education courses such as Introduction to Teaching and Classroom Management. Graduate-level teaching experience preferred; evidence or promise of teaching excellence is essential. Full-time, tenure track position begins fall 1994 or 1995. Screening begins May 15. Women and minority applicants are especially welcome.

Reply to **William J. Hawk, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196, (419) 358-3317**.

Recommend these to your pastor, or read them yourself!

The Anabaptist Writings of David Joris, 1535-1543

David Joris (c. 1501-1556) is one of the most misunderstood figures of the 16th-century Anabaptist movement. Yet during his era he was one of the most important Anabaptist leaders in the Low Countries of Europe. Joris helped both militant and nonviolent Anabaptists cope with the failure of Anabaptist attempts to establish the kingdom of God in the Netherlands and the north German city of Münster between 1533 and 1535.

Volume 7 in the Classics of the Radical Reformation.

Editor **Gary K. Waite**, is associate professor at the University of New Brunswick, teaching Medieval, Renaissance, and Reformation history.
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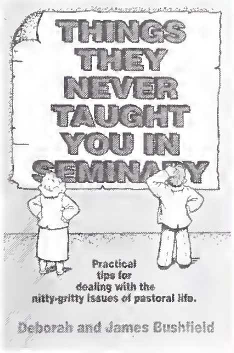
Things They Never Taught You in Seminary


THINGS THEY NEVER TAUGHT YOU IN SEMINARY

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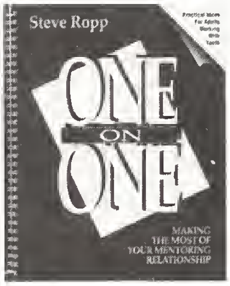
Reviews

BOOKS

How to mentor youth

One on One: Making the Most of Your Mentoring Relationship *by Steve Ropp (Faith & Life Press and Mennonite Publishing House, 1993, 90 pages)*

Reviewed by Doug Basinger, San Francisco



One on One reviews basic elements of mentoring youth in a Christian context and provides resources for a mentoring relationship. Written by an area-conference youth minister who has himself mentored youth, this short, 90-page manual provides valuable tools for mentors on the run.

The six brief, introductory chapters serve as a background for the appendices, which provide examples of how to mentor youth. Chapter headings reveal the purpose of each chapter by using such phrases as mentoring with purpose, portrait of a mentor, understanding adolescence, how and when to listen and talk, and nuts and bolts of mentoring.

The informal style of a spiral-bound book, the short chapters and the large print reinforce the idea that this is a manual, not a book on theory. Two-thirds of the pages of the manual are the appendices. More than half the pages are filled with one appendix—the "share sheets" which lead the mentor through topics for discussion. Only two of the 15 share-sheet sessions might be classified specifically Anabaptist, focusing on killing and pacifism. Other appendices include resources and exercises for mentors to share with each other, a mentoring relationship covenant form with a parental affirmation section, lists of activities to do together, a long (generally helpful) list of questions to start a discussion, a list of simple recipes (unnecessary in my opinion) and an evaluation form, although it isn't entirely clear who completes the form or who reviews it.

Lacking, for me, was a definition of "youth," although one reference is made to teenagers. While I found the share sheet on alcohol, for example, to be quite helpful, there was no such prominence given to sexuality, surely an area of high interest for youth and an area in which to provide much mentoring. I would have also appreciated more attention to Anabaptist distinctives, both traditional and contemporary. Overall, however, this manual would be an asset to any church library or helpful to anyone working with youth.

The future of the church

The Once and Future Church *by Loren B. Mead (Alban Institute, 1991, $9.95)*

Reviewed by Dave Rogalsky, Milverton, Ont.

Loren Mead is the founder and guiding personality of the Alban Institute, a mainline church think-tank centered in Washington. The institute publishes materials for pastors and congregations trying to be a meaningful presence in North American society. As he moves toward his own retirement, Mead distills his years of observations and thoughts about the church and presents his vision, his challenge for the future, in this book.

Mead sees the church in the throes of its second great paradigm shift. The first shift happened when the "apostolic" era gave way to the "Christendom" era. He uses three factors—"the nature of the church," "boundaries" and "the place of mission"—to define these eras and to project into the future.

In the apostolic age the church was a community of believers, separated from a hostile society by boundaries of allegiance and ethics but bringing the good news of Jesus into that society and bringing people out of the society.

In the Christendom age, beginning with Constantine in 313 C.E., the church was a geographical entity, separated from the pagans by the border of the Roman empire and bringing the good news of Jesus to these people through professional missionaries and soldiers. Mead puts the Reformation into the Christendom age, noting that often the Reformation replaced one geographical church with another.

But the Christendom model of centralized denominations is past. Neither North America nor Europe can any longer be spoken of as Christian. The mission field is no longer "out there" but neither is the society necessarily a hostile place for Christians or the church. Often the

Ken and Kass invite you to come along to the mysterious Petra in Jordan, to the awesome pyramids in Egypt, with all of Israel in between.

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society and its structures are indifferent to the church. The shift, according to Mead and in contrast to fundamentalist Christians, is not back to an apostolic model but needs to be a shift to a new way of being church, a new way of bringing mission in a new and different world.

Mead believes in the possibility of the church reinventing itself. He sees the church needing to define its mission in the world, to decide to which part of the world this particular church can minister and to look for what resources it has to carry out its slice of mission. Denominations need to see how they can help congregations carry out their missions rather than expect congregations to support denominations in denominational mission.

Since the "mission field" is everywhere, the call is to a diffuse rather than a concentrated mission. The church is again not geographical but rather a gathering of people. The boundary between the church and the mission field is at best ambiguous and often nonexistent. The mission of the church is to bring the freeing good news of Jesus into every place. This mission is both to individuals and to the society and its structures.

Supporting seniors

Seniors Ministry Manual *by Norma Rudy (Canadian Conference Brethren in Christ Church, 1992, 528 pages)*

Reviewed by Martha F. Graber, North Newton, Kan.

This comprehensive "Manual for Developing and Implementing Support Services and Programmes for Older Adults" is assembled in a useful loose-leaf notebook format. Each of the 20 chapters is easy to access with a tabbed divider, its own title page, table of contents and paging. Chapters vary from six pages for "Volunteer Driver's Handbook" to 53 pages for "Meal Services." Many chapters include a section on additional resources. The chapter on "You and Your Aging Parents/Relatives" outlines plans for six workshop sessions.

Throughout the book the outline format, clear print, lists, charts, forms, examples and easy-to-read style make the extensive, detailed information easy to use, both for those beginning ministry programs in congregations (or communities) and those seeking to add depth and variety to more comprehensive programs.

The opening chapter on "Mandate for Ministry" sets the tone with a spiritual vision and practical challenge. It shows that the church is the obvious caring organization that can respond quickly like a family or neighbor to the unique opportunities for ministries to and with older people.

The author's rich background of 30 years experience in writing for and working with older people enables her to translate vision into reality. Practical steps assist in setting objectives, selecting, planning and maintaining congregational programs.

Chapter titles include "Mobilizing Volunteers," "Intergenerational Programs" and "Seniors Ministry as an Outreach," among others. The "Friendly Visitor's Handbook" chapter is an invaluable aid. Topics include guidelines for visiting such as timing, preparing spiritually, establishing trust, what to talk about, adding variety, communication aids, effective listening, visiting deaf, blind or mentally-impaired people, and visiting in institutions. Other chapters range from "Volunteer Shopping" to "Ministry to the Dying."

Although a few references are specific to the Canadian situation, this is altogether an exciting manual that will be a useful reference to any pastor, committee or individual who is interested in relating to older people and involving even frail elderly in meeting both practical and spiritual needs in the church or community.

Resources

- **Learn As You Go** is the theme of the 1994 children's project packet for the General Conference Mennonite Church. The poster features a course that children can color as they learn about mission work. Each GC church received a packet in March. For additional free copies contact General Conference Communications Office, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.
- **Reaching the World Next Door: How to Spread the Gospel in the Midst of Many Cultures** by Thom and Marcia Hopler (InterVarsity, 1994, $10.99 U.S.) draws from models of cross-cultural ministry in the Bible and shows how to use them to understand and communicate with our neighbors and co-workers.
- **The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament** by Craig S. Keener (InterVarsity, 1994, $29.99 U.S.) uncovers cultural backgrounds and provides historical perspective for nearly every verse in the New Testament. Includes maps, charts, timeline and glossary.
- **Yes We'll Gather** (Gateway Films/Vision Video, Box 540, Worcester, PA 19490, (800) 523-0226, $39.95 U.S.) is a 50-minute video choral workshop led by Alice Parker, intended to help churches and choirs improve their singing. Parker is shown working with a volunteer group of singers at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.
- **Wrestling With Angels** (Zondervan, two 75-minute VHS videocassettes, $149.99 U.S.) examines experiences of people as they challenge issues of faith in real-life situations. Segment hosts include Tony Campolo, Richard Foster and Madeleine L'Engle. Includes study guide.
- **Hearts on Fire** by Penny Lernoux (Orbis Books, 1993, $22.95 U.S.) is the story of the Maryknoll Sisters.
- **Patching God's Garment: Environment and Mission in the 21st Century** by W. Dayton Roberts (MARC, 1-800-777-7752 or 1-818-303-8811, $13.95 U.S.) provides a foundation for Christian environmentalism while showing what we need to understand about our ecosystem.
- **Keep 'Em Singing: 101 Simple and Creative Ideas for Children's Music Directors** by Joy MacKenzie and Lynn Hodges (Zondervan, 1994, $11.99 U.S.) provides help with organization, discipline, performance ideas, clip art to copy and student activity pages.
- **When a Leader Falls: What Happens to Everyone Else?** by Jan Winebrenner and Debra Frazier (Bethany House, $8.99 U.S.) offers practical suggestions for dealing with the congregation's emotional pain and advice for the pastor's spouse.

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Editorial

Looking for authenticity

Becoming adults at the end of the twentieth century, my generation grew up in the shadow of the atomic bomb. We came of age at the beginning of the rise of nationalism, the middle of the computer revolution, and the end of the Cold War. We grew up knowing that our fate rests as much on Japan's economy or Brazil's rain forests as on our own sweat.

We have adapted. The mechanics of operating a VCR that befuddle our grandparents for days come as second nature to us. Learning new computer programs is more a game than a daunting task. Broke, we find ways to travel around the country and around the world, creating what author Doug Coupland calls a "poverty jet set."

Having grown up in front of the television, we have learned to process media images fast enough to stay afloat in the flux of information that largely defines our common culture.

> In a time when worldviews become outdated as quickly as computer chips, we struggle to create meaningful lives.

The survival skill of our generation is adaptability. It's a skill we've learned from having our understanding of the world changed again and again. We've learned not to trust politicians, parents or pastors completely, since we have seen all of these fail us, sometimes devastatingly.

In the book *13th Gen*, Neil Howe and Bill Strauss make the point that we will be the first generation in North America that expects to be worse off financially than our parents. In the United States as a teenager, I helplessly watched the national deficit break $1 trillion. Twentysomethings have seen our future mortgaged to pay for an extravagant lifestyle we were not invited to share. We've learned to give our trust cautiously, with both eyes open.

The mistrust we learned from the nightly news carried over into church as well. Campaigning presidents taught us how language can be manipulated: how easy it is to say one thing and do another. Watching as abuse by church leaders became exposed showed us that religious language can just as easily serve less than holy ends.

But mistrust is only part of the story. The twentysomething Mennonites I know care deeply about justice and about peace. Many have spent time doing volunteer work to help make some sense out of this senseless world.

Perfect soul: Many older people have tried to describe, or more aptly diagnose, my generation. Many take our mistrust for cynicism. Allan Bloom, in *The Closing of the American Mind*, writes, "Today's students no longer have any image of a perfect soul, and hence do not long to have one."

Bloom is partly right. We don't have an image of the perfect soul. That's because every time we think we see it, it turns out to be a mirage.

But the absence of the image does not remove the longing. If our generation's adaptability has its roots in mistrust, we've put that adaptability to use looking for something authentic. In a time when worldviews become outdated as quickly as computer chips, we struggle to create meaningful lives.

What is it we're after? Authenticity. I know twentysomethings who are fed up with the church, with good reason. They rightly see the church as a place where too often we talk a lofty idealism but fear any real change in the status quo. Many prefer a bar to a church, where people may sometimes be distasteful, but at least they say what they mean.

If the church wants to attract twentysomethings, offer us authenticity, and accept ours. When I tell you that some days God feels a hundred miles away from me, don't condemn me. Share with me how you feel distant from God. If God is in your heart, you don't need to shout it at me, I will see God there. *Larry Penner*

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Jesus we know, but who are you? / p. 12

Mennonite Health Association disbands / p. 13

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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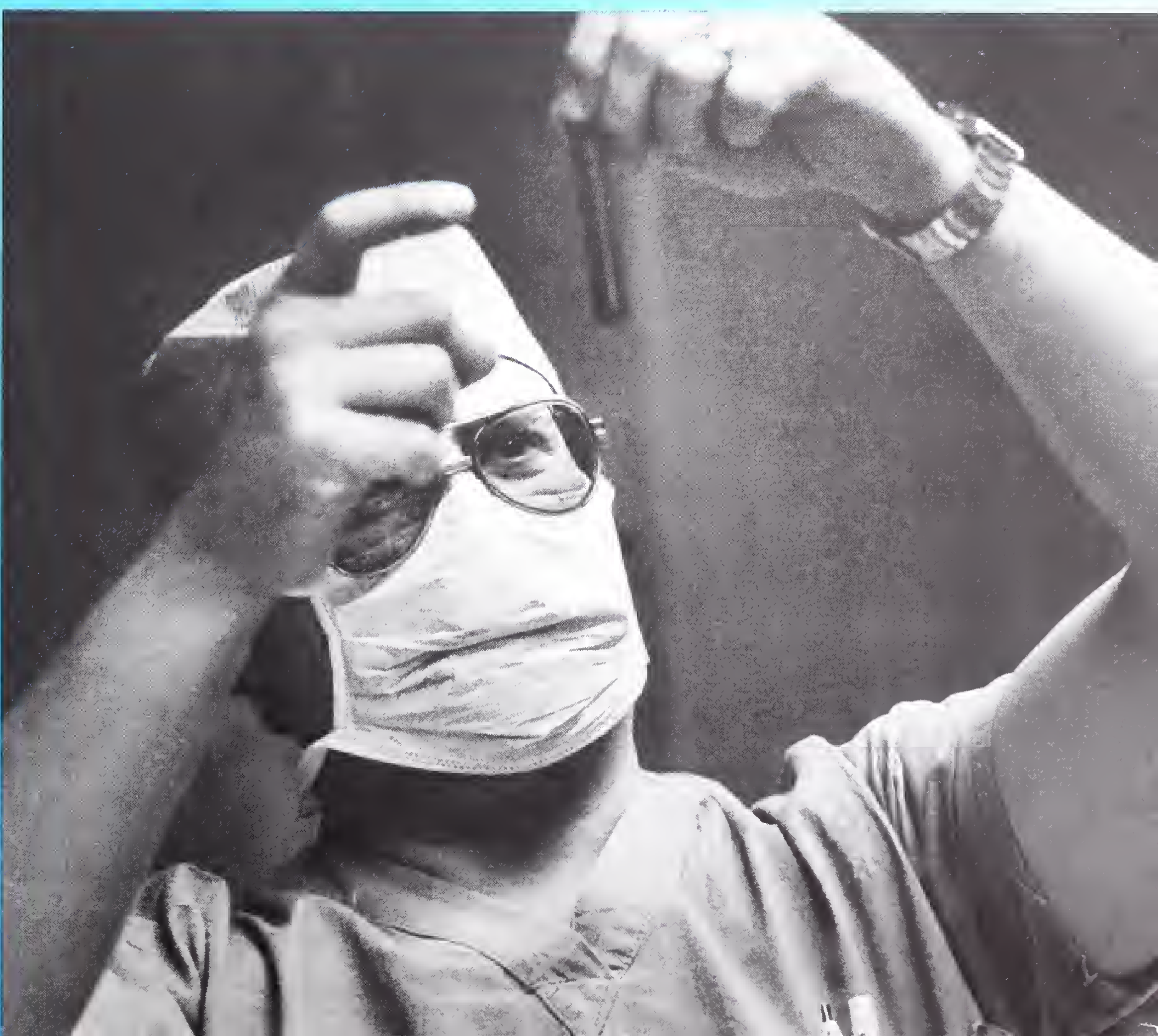
HEALTH CARE: A CRISIS OR AN OPPORTUNITY?

- 9 ways to save money on health care (see page 5)
- No uninsured citizens in Canada (see page 7)

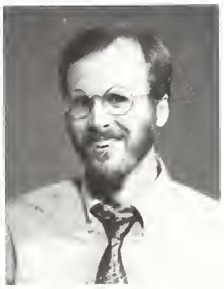


Prologue

At Pentecost the Spirit fell upon the early church and gave the disciples power to continue Jesus' ministry of proclaiming the reign of God. That ministry also included healing. They devoted themselves not only "to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42) but to mutual care and just living, which included having "all things in common" (2:44).

As Jesus' followers today, we, too, are empowered by the Spirit to bringing healing and justice to one another and to all in need. Health care is not some secular or esoteric concern but a vital issue that the church must address. In Canada, according to Paul Peters (see page 7), the Mennonite church has been involved in making health care available to all. Many of the early Mennonite missionaries were involved in the healing arts. The Mennonite Christian Hospital in Taiwan and the many Mennonite-related mental health centers in Canada and the United States are current examples of Mennonite work in health care.

Read Willard Krabill's article (page 3) on the ongoing health-care debate in the United States and what role the church can play in that.



J.B. Miller helps us think about the stock market (page 11), and Jacob Elias from our seminary encourages us to give more attention to the writings of the apostle Paul.

Good health. *gh*

Next issue: Mennonite artists

Cover: Photo by Jean-Claude Lejeune

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With health-care reform on the U.S. agenda, the church has an opportunity to bear witness about justice, stewardship and acceptance of our mortality.

An OPPORTUNITY the church dare not ignore

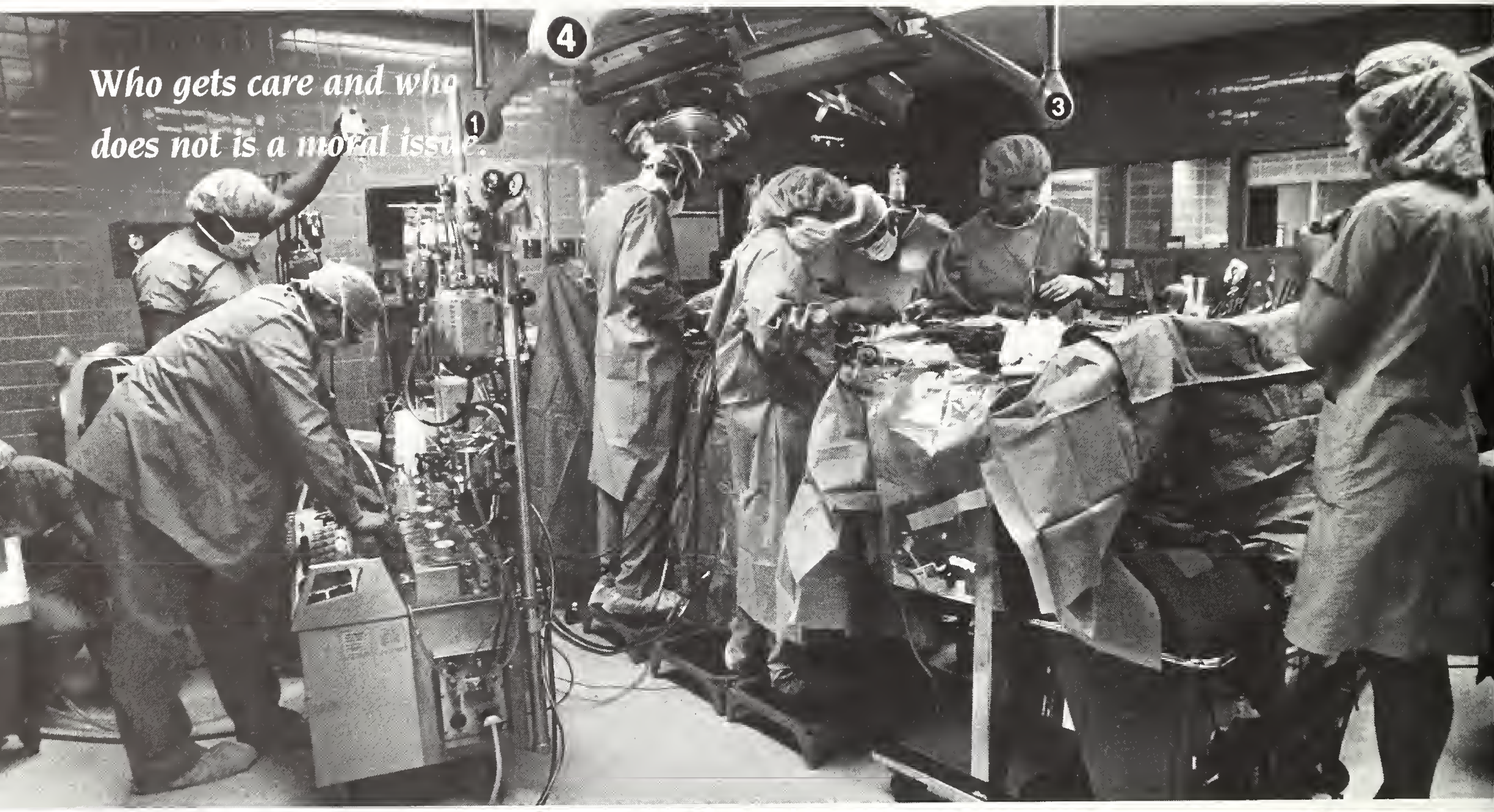
Willard S. Krabill

The call for reform in the way health-care services are or are not provided in the United States is not new, but the intensity of it has reached a new peak. President Theodore Roosevelt called for change early in this century. President Truman's call for national health insurance was rejected in 1946. President Johnson's effort resulted in Medicare and Medicaid, national health insurance for the elderly and the very poor. During the Nixon years we tried regulation and price controls to halt rising costs. In the Reagan-Bush era we tried competition, but costs continued their unrestrained rise, and we now have 15 percent of our population without health insurance at any given time, and all but the wealthy worry about rising medical costs and the possible loss of their insurance coverage.

The governments of all other industrialized nations except South Africa have regarded the health care of their citizens as a societal responsibility and have assured universal coverage of their people.

Meanwhile the governments of all other industrialized nations except South Africa have regarded the health care of their citizens as a societal responsibility and have assured universal coverage of their people. Based on the criteria of cost as well as unequal access, many consider our current "system" a national disgrace.

Justice in health care is an issue of such moral significance that the church now has an opportunity for witness that it dare not ignore. Who gets care and who does not is a moral issue. For too long our society has accepted the rationing of medical



Who gets care and who does not is a moral issue.

services according to the ability to pay. We have an opportunity to express our belief in the worth of all people, an opportunity to be advocates for the underserved and powerless, an opportunity to help find new ways of sharing so that the sick may be cared for, an opportunity to demonstrate a readiness to reduce our demands for medical treatment by the prevention of illness and by more modest expectations for expensive medical interventions. We have a golden opportunity to share our sense of justice, our understanding of stewardship and our acceptance of our mortality.

After many months of anticipation, the Clinton health plan has been introduced. So have several others. Mennonites may not agree on the merits of the various proposals before Congress, but we can agree on the necessity for change, and we can join in applauding the Clintons for their courage in bringing health care to the center of our national stage, recognizing that "it is time to fix it."

The Clinton goals: In his presentation to Congress, President Clinton listed six goals for his reform proposal: security, savings, simplicity, choice, quality and responsibility. The President's plan should be judged by the degree to which it fulfills those six desirable objectives. As proposed, the goal of security (coverage for all) seems more achievable than the goal of savings. The complexity of the Clinton plan also brings into question whether the goal of simplicity will be realized.

Christians also have a set of values by which we should judge the various proposals. These are justice, community, stewardship, wholeness and the worth of all people.

VALUES

Justice: Fifteen percent of U.S. citizens are uninsured, and many of those now insured will lose their coverage as the job market changes. The number of uninsured has risen each year. Nine percent of the uninsured population can never get insurance ("medically uninsurable") because of the underwriting practices of the insurance industry. Many who have good insurance coverage receive more medical treatment than is necessary or even beneficial. Many of those without adequate coverage receive too little treatment too late. We have too little preventive care and too much avoidable suffering. The poorer health statistics and poorer hospital outcomes for the uninsured should be unacceptable to a civilized nation.

Community: In American society individualism regularly trumps community. Individual rights prevail over community well-being. Christians should demonstrate that in the human family we thrive only as parts of communities, interdependent and interconnected. Mennonites should demonstrate a commitment to community and the common good.

Stewardship: The waste, duplication, inefficiency and cost shifting of the current medical enterprise is offensive to our convictions about stewardship. The elimination of unnecessary treatment, of the overzealous practice of defensive medicine, or the overuse of expensive technology and of futile treatment that prolongs death rather than life should all be looked for in the reform proposals. "Savings" is one of President Clinton's six objectives, but it is doubtful that, on balance, the Clinton plan will halt rising costs. And after all the political concessions and horse trading are completed, it is even more doubtful that the result will be an affordable system.

Stewardship also demands that we examine our own use of medical resources. Mennonites can set an example in "living more with less" in all areas of life, including medical care. We also should be known for our commitment to the prevention of illness, by our healthful lifestyles and by our acceptance of our mortality.

Wholeness: The health-care crisis has been aggravated by our society's failure to recognize the unity of mind and spirit with body. We fail to utilize the nonphysical resources that can contribute to restoration of health. We fail to understand that one can be healed without being cured, and in our pursuit of cure we forget to care. We forget that caring itself fosters curing.

The worth of all people: Our current system values some lives a great deal more than others. We spend large amounts of money fighting for the survival of a tiny, premature infant who has a minimal chance of ever leading a normal life, while only 50 percent of our 2-year-olds have been immunized. We spent $1 million for experimental surgery on a pair of Siamese twins, even sacrificing one, but refuse to provide basic care to millions of others of our citizens.

THE COMING DEBATE

As conscientious, concerned, justice-minded Christians we should be aware of the way our political and economic systems work. There are more than 700 powerful and well-financed health-industry lobbyists in Washington gearing up to oppose any reform provisions that would have an unfavorable effect on the economic interests of their lobby (physicians, hospitals, drug companies, medical technology manufacturers, insurance companies, lawyers). Millions of dollars have already been given to congressional campaign funds and there is more where that came from. All lobbyists will claim to have "only the best interests of the patient in mind." Unbiased evaluations of the various proposals will be hard to find.

9 ways to save money on health care

1. Prevent illness before it begins. The following will help:
   - don't smoke
   - wear seat belts
   - exercise
   - maintain moderate weight
   - keep immunizations current.
2. Have regular physical examinations.
3. Plan ahead on what medical facility you'll use in case of an emergency, and plan who to contact.
4. Take advantage of low-cost diagnostic testing and immunizations, such as those given at a health fair or local public health office.
5. Use generic brands when purchasing prescription drugs whenever possible.
6. Take medical, psychological and dental advice only from established, recognized professionals.
7. Always ask doctors what hospital they're affiliated with and where they received their speciality training.
8. Be suspicious of any practitioner who is too quick to diagnose a food allergy or who prescribes unusual diets or long-term courses of antibiotics.
9. Question those who prescribe expensive vitamins and supplements or who sell them in their offices.

—from Mennonite Mutual Aid

We also hear a great deal about the role of government in health care. None of us wants another wasteful and inefficient government bureaucracy. Yet without government intervention the needed changes do not occur. We have had many years for the insurance industry to reform itself, but risk rating, exclusions and cancellations continue. We have had many years for the medical profession to devise ways to care for all citizens, to police those who gouge the public, to correct the maldistribution of physicians geographically and across the specialties, and to work for more equitable reward for nurses and other clinicians. It somehow always falls to government to respond to inadequacies and abuses and to bring about needed change, yet we then fault government for its interference.

Christians should also be alert to the plight of the powerless in the impending debate. The poor do not run television ads. It is our responsibility to speak on their behalf.

In the coming months we will hear many fears planted by the special-interest groups. We must remember that the greater fear should be that of doing nothing or changing too little. We will hear much scorn heaped on the Clintons, especially Hillary jokes. We will hear much misinformation about the systems of other countries, especially Canada's. When this comes from people in the church it is especially unfortunate and unbecoming. We can learn much from our Canadian sisters and brothers if we'd ask and listen. (See page 7.)

The Mennonite Central Committee Washington office believes a single-payer plan best promotes the values held by Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. The concern of many about the government's ability to manage efficiently is a justifiable one, given its past record and our recent political history. Nevertheless, Medicaid and Medicare operate with a much lower administrative overhead than does the private insurance industry.

Mennonites should be expected to agree on the need for justice in our health-care delivery system, on the need for a more scriptural view of the goals of medicine and on the meaning of mortality. Mennonites can agree on the values by which we evaluate the

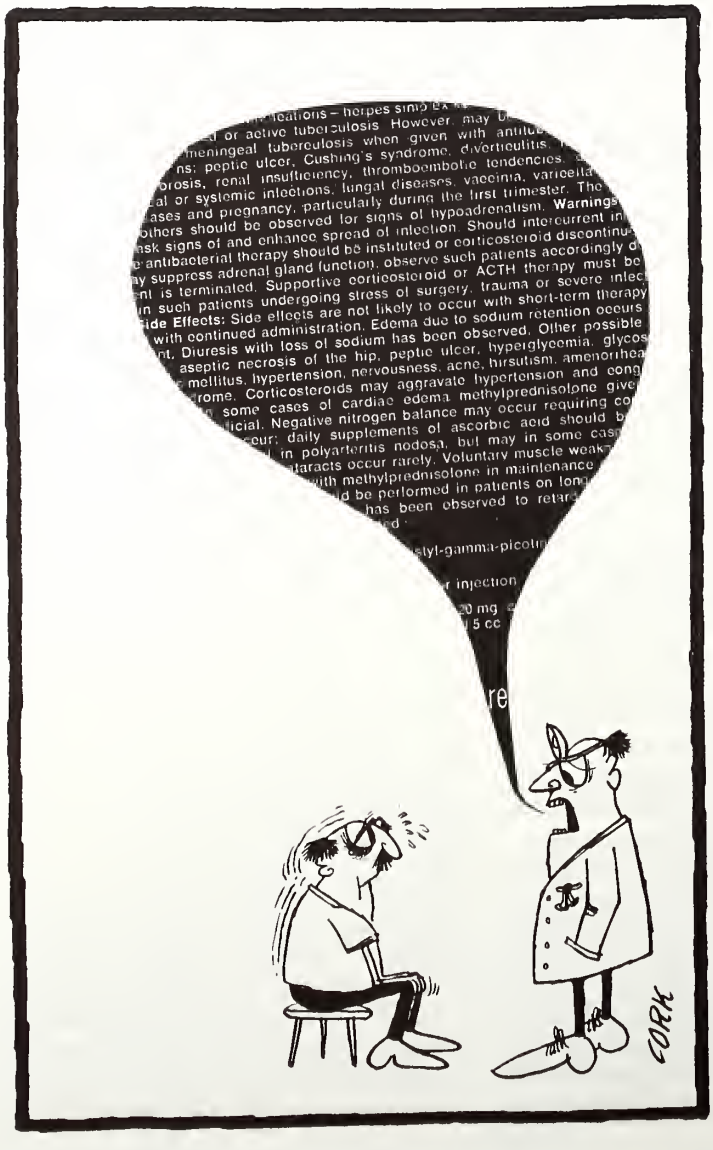
> ***The challenge for the church is to help all of us maintain a commitment to justice and the common good rather than to self-interest and the maintenance of economic advantage.***

proposals. We likely do not yet agree on the best financing mechanism, on the role of government or on what benefits should be included in the basic benefits package that should be available to all. We will be tempted to view the proposed changes through the glasses of our own interests (business, professional and personal), especially through the "green screen" of our own pocketbooks. The challenge for the church is to help all of us maintain a commitment to justice and the common good rather than to self-interest and the maintenance of economic advantage. We must ask each other, "What am I wiling to forego so that my brothers and sisters may be cared for?"

THE RESPONSE OF THE CHURCH

In July 1992 the General Conference Mennonite Church U.S. Assembly at Sioux Falls, S.D., adopted a resolution on health care. So did the Mennonite Church at Philadelphia '93. From the Sioux Falls statement: "As Mennonite Christians we are called to help shape the vision for a better and more just health-care system. We must also actively work to bring it about." From the Philadelphia '93 resolution: "The church is called to respond to this crisis through its biblical concern for both healing and social justice." Both groups resolved "to recover a commitment to community in bearing the cost of health care" (mutual aid).

We are privileged to live at a time when our country is considering one of the most significant advances in social justice since World War II. Our voice is needed and we should become involved as individuals and as congregations in our communities and in our professions.



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ns: peptic ulcer, Cushing's syndrome, diverticulitis,
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others should be observed for signs of hypoadrenalism. Warnings
sk signs of and enhance spread of infection. Should intercurrent in
antibacterial therapy should be instituted or corticosteroid discontinu
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Gordon Bonnyman said it well in the December 1993 issue of *Sojourners*: "This is a historic opportunity to advance the cause of social justice and alleviate human suffering. Many in earlier decades who struggled vainly for health reform would envy us this occasion. None of us should miss the chance to play a part."

Willard Krabill, a medical doctor, wrote this article on behalf of the Health Dialogue Steering Committee, which consisted of representatives of Mennonite Health Association, Mennonite Health Services, Mennonite Medical Association, Mennonite Mutual Aid and Mennonite Nurses Association. The committee was called into being by the inter-Mennonite Council of Moderators and Secretaries.

RESOURCES *on health care*

- *Medical Ethics: Human Choices*, John Rogers, ed. (Herald Press, 1988)
- Adult Wellness Course (Mennonite Mutual Aid, 1983)
- Children's Wellness Course (Mennonite Mutual Aid, 1987)
- *A Life of Wholeness* by Ann Raber (Herald Press, 1993)
- *Take the Scenic Route* (Mennonite Mutual Aid, 1991)
- *Responding to HIV/AIDS: A Resource Guide for Congregations* (Mennonite Mutual Aid, revised 1992)
- *Life Choices: Guidelines for Creating Your Advance Medical Directives* (Mennonite Mutual Aid, 1992)
- *Health Care Reform: Exploring the Options* (Mennonite Mutual Aid, 1992)

An overview of Canada's health-care system

No UNINSURED citizens

Paul Peters

The past two to three decades have seen unparalleled advances in medical knowledge and technology. It has also been a time of major changes in how health-care services are provided and financed in Canada. In many ways it has been a loss of autonomy for those who provide these services and has moved toward essentially government control and an increased voice by those who use the system. The winds of change were gusty at times, and some major whirlwinds occurred, but in the end these changes have led to a health-care system in Canada that is a model and compares well with the best in the world. As a noted long-time hospital administrator recently said, "Only the foolhardy still dream of the good old days."

Let me document briefly the evolution/revolution of the Canadian health-care system. It was more a matter of process over the past four decades than one act of legislation, and now it is receiving a major tune up. Policy papers dating back to 1919 suggest the politicians' concerns for the need to provide health care in a more comprehensive and universal manner. It has been the involvement of the federal government in setting policy and in taking increased fiscal responsibility that has led to relative equality in health care between the rich and poor provinces and the equal availability for all. Canada does not have uninsurable citizens.

Hospital care

In 1948 the federal government gave the provinces a decade to come up with legislation that would provide comprehensive and universal hospital insurance to all Canadian citizens. Meeting these standards, provinces were guaranteed 50 percent funding from the federal government. In Manitoba the Health Insurances Act of July 1958 provided complete coverage for all Manitobans.

The strong socialist-oriented government of Saskatchewan gave leadership both in the hospital- and medical-care systems on the Canadian scene. They were about a decade ahead of the other provinces in providing these services. The New Democratic Party, very socially oriented, also had a strong influence in determining the direction of health care.

The federal government realized the need for institutional care for the chronically ill and disabled, but it was not until July 1973 that legislation passed providing government-assisted personal care home facilities. Before that, many "old folks' homes" had been built, but the initiative came essentially from the church.

The process to determine the eligibility for this type of care is equitable. Nobody is excluded for financial reasons, and people's eligibility never expires. I have attended patients in these care homes and have found the physical structures and the nursing care excellent. It has been said that the level of civilization of a country is determined by how well the elderly and the sick are cared for. I'm sure this was taken into consideration when the United Nations declared Canada one of the most desired countries in the world to live in.

Medical care

Although several provinces offered a variety of insured services, it was not until 1969 that the federal government announced the Health Care Services Insurance Act, again promising 50 percent funding for provinces that complied with the specifics of the act. Most of the insured services in place at the time were good and equitable but not as comprehensive and universal as they could be. Confrontations arose between government and the profes-

It has been said that the level of civilization of a country is determined by how well the elderly and the sick are cared for.

sions, but the disruptions were usually short term, and eventually an agreement made it possible for all the provinces and both territories to subscribe to the federal plan by April 1972. The comprehensiveness of coverage expanded in the next decade to cover, in full or in part, optometry, chiropractic, dental care for children, prosthetics, ambulance service, respite-care day programs and home care.

A closer analysis of the development of this system would show that the challenges Health Care Canada faces relate largely to changes in health-care concepts, technology and the economy. The four areas that a "Forum on Health" will address in the coming year are these:

1. gaining broader understanding of the determinates of health,
2. maintaining universal access to appropriate health care,
3. minimizing significant inequalities in the system and
4. combatting inefficient use of resources.

However, it is not only in the areas of health care that major reforms are being implemented. The lingering recession has also necessitated equivalent changes in the areas of education and public services.

Despite what has been said, Canada has an excellent, unparalleled, comprehensive health-care system. The new Liberal government, in cooperation with the provinces, continues to view health care for all as "a sacred trust" that every Canadian citizen has a right to. The question of how the church does or does not relate to health care has a long history prior to government plans.

The churches were the prime promoters of health care in many areas of urban and rural Canada.

The churches were the prime promoters of health care in many areas of urban and rural Canada. For example, the Concordia Plan, dating back to 1928, and the Bethania Home, dating back to 1944, were both established by Manitoba Mennonites. In the 1940s many rural areas also developed senior citizens' homes primarily operated by the churches. Many orders of Catholic nuns and the Salvation Army were involved in institutional health care. Although their fiscal responsibility was minimal, their influence was still strong.

One of the prime examples of church leadership has been the development of the Eden Mental Health Centre in Winkler, Man. This was jointly spearheaded by the Manitoba Mennonite churches and continues to be a model for mental health care. The many ancillary services the center provides are still strongly supported by the churches in providing approximately $300,000 per year.

In Canada the church and state have worked together well and are basically courteous to each other. Pierre Trudeau, past prime minister, used the term "just society." In health care we have come as close to achieving this as we likely will. I do not believe the church could have done any better than what it achieved jointly with the government.

Difficult decisions: I have had several exposures to the health services in developing countries. It is not feasible to translate good health-care systems of developed nations to those of developing nations. Greater emphasis must be placed on preventive medicine, which is by far the most cost-effective. Basic immunizations, nutrition, maternal health care, sanitation and clean water supplies must be in place before other less cost-effective health-care programs are promoted. Difficult decisions often have to be made when what we would consider essential health services must be denied basically for economic reasons. My recent eight-week stay in Cambodia again confirmed the problem that health-care workers often face when they work in these countries.

Canadians have been looking south to see how the health-care reforms in the United States are developing. The Canadian model would demand major concessions by those who provide health care, and it appears that a compromise will likely have to be reached that falls short of what the Canadian system provides.

On the cover of the Feb. 15 *Post-Graduate Medicine* special issue on health-care reform is the question, "Who needs Washington? Let's fix the health-care system ourselves." The Canadian experience shows that unless there is strong legislation, a comprehensive health-care-service system available for all American citizens is unlikely to result. The inequities of the Canadian system are but a faint glow compared to the glaring injustice that the current U.S. system imposes on millions of people. Washington should speak firmly and resolutely. The Joan of Arc today could well be Hillary Clinton. She has dared to walk where great men for decades have feared to tread.

Paul Peters is a family physician in Steinbach, Man.

Letters

No to pagoda

I could hardly believe what I read in the "Speaking Out" column by Earl Martin (March 22 issue, page 10). Mennonite Central Committee used funds to help rebuild a Buddhist temple? It seems like a bad dream, a bad joke or both.

I fail to see how MCC is furthering the work of Christ by building a temple for a non-Christian religion. Will we be reading next that MCC funds were used to print and distribute some cult group's pamphlets?

I know MCC feeds and provides material aid to non-Christians. However, satisfying their physical needs in the hope of showing them Christ and satisfying their non-Christian spiritual needs are two different matters to me.

I read the article several times, hoping to find reference to Earl Martin taking the matter to God in prayer. Did anyone in MCC consult our Lord to see what he thought of our helping build the temple of another god? *Janice Hershberger, Clay Center, Kan.*

Inside
Mennonite
Christ is Risen!

After reading "Is it right to help build a Buddhist worship center?" by Earl Martin (March 22 issue, page 10), I have to ask if Mr. Martin, when he coordinated the Mennonite Central Committee program in Hanoi, acted on his own, or did he receive approval from MCC when the Buddhist pagoda was funded?

Mr. Martin reports how the Buddhist folks felt about the nearby Christian church: "Oh, we all work together. We will volunteer labor to build the church and the Christians will volunteer to help build the pagoda."

How would the apostle Paul have addressed this problem? When Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians, his main thrust was for correction of error brought about by the carnality of the believers at Corinth. In his second letter to the Corinthians he defends his authority by placing before the church the overwhelming evidence of his sincerity in serving God.

Would Paul have addressed the pagoda issue like he spoke to the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 6:11-17? In verse 14 he states, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?" In verse 17, "Therefore come out among them and be separate, says the Lord."

It is impossible for God to bless fully and use his children who are in compromise or complicity with evil. Separation from evil implies (1) separation in desire, motive and act from the world, in the ethically bad sense of this present world system (see Revelation 13:8), and (2) separation from false teachers, who are described as "vessels … for dishonor" (2 Timothy 2:20-21; 2 John 9-11).

Would the Christians in Hanoi do well to follow Paul's teaching to the Corinthians? Would Mr. Martin have responded differently after reading Paul's letter to fund the rebuilding of the Buddhist pagoda?

When we fear to discriminate between Christians and Buddhists and make a wrong judgment, does this not bring ridicule and reproach upon the church? *Orval Schwartz, Pretty Prairie, Kan.*

Mennonite Central Committee's decision to fund the repair of a pagoda has biblical precedent: 1 Kings 11:7,8. *Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

Biblical, not humanist values

It is impossible to eliminate the influence of our culture on our forms of worship, but we must try to keep the culture from permeating and distorting our faith. Mennonites appear to follow no longer the biblical principles of our founding fathers. Are we being swayed, even deceived, by our culture? The philosophy of humanism and other beliefs are leading astray some (if not many) of the elect, to quote Paul.

One illustration is the definition of the word "saint." Within the past week I have seen it misused by a respected Mennonite pastor and a Mennonite writer. Instead of using the biblical concept of saint, as the apostle Paul used it, they used it as does the secular world (the idea originating from the Roman Catholic Church—something we abandoned nearly 500 years ago). Paul applied the word saint to any believer, one who has put their faith in Jesus Christ, whose atoning work then has made us whole, or righteous (Ephesians 1:1 and Philippians 1:1). Saint, therefore, does not describe a "good" person or a nearly perfect one but merely a sinner saved by grace. Yet in the film review of *Philadelphia* by Larry Penner (Feb. 22 issue) we read, "Beckett is no saint, although considerably more saint than sinner." (Beckett is the homosexual man who is one of the main characters.) How can Penner say Beckett is "more saint than sinner"? You are either one or the other, not more one than the other.

The more important example of being led astray by humanists is the way we take on their causes and philosophies. While Christianity is about making all things subservient to and centered around Jesus Christ as Lord, the humanist philosophy elevates human values and characteristics, focusing everything on mankind, or humanity. Furthermore, we are to be tolerant of anything and everything. Right or wrong is no longer relevant. We must be nice and talk "politically correct" with everyone, or else we may be found guilty of victimizing someone.

That is not the way our Anabaptist forefathers believed the Scriptures. Many of us are being deceived, and when a movie like *Philadelphia* comes out, we don't bother to look at it from a moral or Christian perspective but from the prevailing humanist point of view. This is a slick propaganda movie for homosexual agenda. Larry Penner speaks of a "homophobic" attorney. There "ain't no such crittur." It's a word coined by the gay community that they apply to anyone who disagrees with them. Let me use one of Penner's sentences to prove this is a propaganda forum for the gay movement: " … the blatant gay bashing of his boss conveniently tips the audience's loyalty to Hanks [the homosexual], an unnecessary favor." Then he says, "But these are quibbles." Oh?

If you slant the plot or characters to fit your agenda, to make the right person "the good guy" and the other one "the bad guy," that becomes propaganda, not quibbles. This kind of thing was done by Hollywood during World War II, with the blessing of the U.S. government and even with monetary considerations, I understand. Did we cry "foul" then? Why don't we call foul now? Because we've been taken in by the humanists with their gay rights agenda and the like. I say this with great sorrow and compassion.

Let us follow the biblical teaching of what true religion means: "to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (James 1:27). We Mennonites are still good at taking care of the social needs of "the orphans and widows in their distress," but the second part—"keeping ourselves unpolluted by the world"—I'm afraid that holy living has gone out the window. It's just not politically correct. Would to God we would return to the "narrow way that leads to life." *Wilmer Sprunger, Berne, Ind.*

What are gains of integration?

A conference leader recently wrote with regard to the contemplated MC/GCMC integration, "I know that while there are many things to be gained, there will also be losses." If recent denominational mergers are at all indicative of what may happen, these losses will probably include (1) the loss of some congregations who prefer not to be part of a newly merged conference, (2) some loss of support as congregations feel less ownership in a new, larger denomination, (3) a major expenditure of valuable and scarce resources in developing a new denominational structure and (4) a smaller proportion of total resources spent in mission, outreach and ministry to those who are outside church membership. In addition, leaders of smaller denominations in the Brethren in Christ/Mennonite family have indicated that it may be more difficult to cooperate closely with one denomination that is so much bigger than all of the others. The net result would then be less working together across the whole BIC/Mennonite family. A prominent Presbyterian leader, reflecting on denominational mergers in the 1980s, recently wrote, "The complexities encountered in building new denominational headquarters and restructuring administrative staff have probably been enough to convince all but the most optimistic that contemplating any further such unions is hardly worthwhile" (Keith R. Crim in Phillips and Coote, eds., *Toward the 21st Century in Christian Mission*, 1993).

The "losses" seem relatively apparent, but what are the "many things to be gained"? Isn't it time for *The Mennonite* as our conference paper to call on our conference leadership for some clear, concrete, specific answers as to what makes integration worth the cost? And please, no simplistic appeals to Jesus' prayer that we, as his disciples, will be one. Unity is not the issue. All of us are for unity. The issue is how to best maintain the unity we already have and create new unity as we work at the mission Christ has entrusted to the church. We need to know how and why unity through "integration" is better than unity through "cooperation," so much better that it justifies its cost.

If unity automatically meant structural union, then obviously all of the GCMC congregations in the Newton, Kan., area ought to merge into one congregation in the name of unity. Would this make a better witness, a stronger mission in central Kansas? Is MC/GCMC cooperation less a witness than GCMC/MC merger?

Please, let's have some straight talk on how integration will enable us better to be the body of Christ in our world today. How will it make us better able to carry on the task Christ has given to the church?

Finally, assuming that there are good answers and the merger does go through, how about "Fellowship of Mennonite Churches" as the name of the new denomination? *Robert L. Ramseyer, Hiroshima, Japan*

Ideas your church can try

Tiefengrund Mennonite Church in Laird, Sask., includes in its newsletter short reviews of new books as well as videos that have been added to the church's library. Church librarian Val Friesen also asks for feedback about resources in the library.

Send your ideas to The Mennonite, *Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

From our mission workers

Gaborone, Botswana—The "Mahube ("Daybreak") Express" bus leaves Francistown not at dawn but in the wilting, midday summer heat. Nor is it by anyone's definition an "express."

As the bus labored along on my six-hour journey to the capital city, the hubbub around me receded and I became aware of a conversation unfolding beside me between two young travelers. One was a brassy young man, no doubt a school graduate, with stylish jeans and the air of a winning hand. He had engaged in verbal play a young woman from an ethnic minority who wore a uniform that marked her as a member of a New Religious Movement. As I focused on this uneven fencing match I glimpsed something remarkable. Despite the mocking questions and demeaning remarks made at her expense, the young woman displayed no fear. She answered deliberately but not aggressively the barbs thrown her way, a summery self-confidence announcing itself with growing conviction. It was clear that this woman, though probably not literate, possessed an invincible self-esteem, as if in the lee of some mighty, joyful secret. Though needled and provoked, she refused to be driven into silent humiliation or outrage. And when the repartee ended, her dignity remained perfectly intact, her young tormentor in bemused retreat.

All the while darkness had fallen as we rode the not-so-express bus.

As I ponder now, with some envy, the poise of that rare young woman in the face of a scarcely concealed sneer, I wonder if this was the secret of her strength: that she knew her real destination—"daybreak"—was emblazoned on the side of the bus even as it trundled into deepening night?

"Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city" (Hebrews 11:16). *Jonathan P. Larson*

Fiscal health

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Living with bears and bulls

Tips on surviving stock market fluctuations

J.B. Miller

During the last two months, many people have been waking up to the realization that their portfolio of investments is worth less than it was the day before. Looking at their individual stock or mutual fund performance has not been a pretty sight. In five straight days the U.S. stock market Dow Jones Industrial Average lost over 240 points, or 6.3 percent.

For the first time many investors are hearing about a bear market. The stock market is often described as either a bear market or a bull market. Many of today's investors know little about what a real bear market looks like. A bear market is one that is losing value and maintains that trend for a given period of time. The length of decline is up for debate. A bull market, on the other hand, is a market that is rising in value over a sustained period of time. That is what most investors are used to, at least those who have been in the market for only the last 10 years.

Of course there have been adjustments to the market during those 10 years. Witness October 1987, when the Dow dropped more than 500 points in one day. Some people described that as a one-day bear market. Overall, however, the 10-year trend has been up, and it has been up significantly. In 1982 the Dow Jones Industrial Average was around 800. As of April 13 it was at 3,661 even after the recent decline. With one or two bumps in the road, the trend has consistently been upward.

So is now the time to flee the stock market? Most students of the market do not think so. Market historians will tell you it is hard to find a 10-year period when stocks have not outperformed bonds and savings instruments. As the October 1987 decline demonstrated, even the sharpest downturns have been temporary. But these types of adjustments, albeit painful, can and should be valuable lessons.

"Anyone who is in the market must realize that there will be periodic adjustments. People who have little tolerance for volatility should not be in the market to begin with," said Keith Yoder, equities portfolio manager at Mennonite Mutual Aid. "Many investors have only seen their investments go up each year, but that may not always be the case. An understanding of potential risks and a clear understanding of the investor's objectives will help ease but never eliminate the frustrations of market correction."

Market corrections: Investors who do not have the comfort level of seeing their stocks decline in value may want to consider retreating to less volatile investments such as certificates of deposit and money-market accounts. But don't expect exciting returns with these investments; they don't exist today. For seasoned investors, market corrections are periodic occurrences, and experts agree that the worst thing investors could have done after the crash of 1987 was to sell their stock portfolio. The fact remains that for the patient investor, riding out the '87 crash was the appropriate strategy.

A recent study by T. Rowe Price Associates, a large, Maryland-based mutual fund manager, analyzed five specific portfolios for performance from 1946 to 1993. The average annual return on the portfolio with 100 percent stock holdings during that period was 11.7 percent. The portfolio with 100 percent bonds yielded an average return of 5.9 percent. Portfolios with a mix of stocks and bonds fell between these two.

Another interesting fact for these portfolios was that the stock portfolio lost 26.5 percent of its value in its worst year (1974), while the bond portfolio declined only 1.3 percent in its worst year.

One fear of many market experts was over the huge influx of money over the past few years from less sophisticated investors into mutual funds. The fear was that with the first stock market correction, much of this money would flee and push the market even lower. To date that has not occurred. Adjustments that have been made tend to be in international portfolios and not in domestic ones. This supports the point that most investors today realize market corrections will occur from time to time.

Bolting from the market now, the experts pretty well concur, is not the appropriate action. Of course, if your portfolio is loaded with low-quality companies that you hoped would give you great returns, then anything can happen.

Is the market at the end of its correction and is it ready to rebound and hit 4,000? Sorry. That takes a better crystal ball than the one I use.

Jesus we know, but who are you?

A plea not to ignore the letters of Paul

Jacob W. Elias

Among Mennonites who still read their Bibles I find myself in the minority. I study Paul's letters.

This habit makes me suspect to some. In some circles, quoting Paul is not politically correct.

Jesus we know. But who is Paul? And why should Mennonites give him their attention?

I have come to suspect that for some Mennonite pastors and congregations, the New Testament may as well not include Paul's letters. Based on casual inquiries among pastors, I have the impression that their sermons tend largely to avoid the epistles.

Many Mennonites don't know what to do with Paul. I have sometimes pondered why. I offer some possible reasons.

Paul was too evangelistic. Mennonites are too placid and reserved to say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation" (Romans 1:16).

Yet Paul was also committed to peacemaking: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21). So was Paul an evangelical pietist or a liberal political activist? Little wonder Mennonites are confused about Paul. He combined evangelism and social action.

For some people, Paul overemphasized world mission. He informed the churches in Rome, "I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain" (Romans 15:24). Why not stay a while? Paul's mission agenda seemed to crowd out community building.

Yet Paul seemed also to expend energy in pastoral care. He even became enmeshed in resolving petty squabbles in one local church: "I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord" (Philippians 4:2). Was Paul a missionary concerned with proclaiming the gospel, or was he a pastor seeking to build up the church?

More people experience their biggest difficulty with Paul's attitude toward women. Some are upset with Paul for including Phoebe, Prisca, Mary and other women in a series of greetings addressed to church leaders (Romans 16). Concerning Andronicus and Junia, Paul admits, "They are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was" (Romans 16:7). Clearly Paul recognized both women and men as his equal partners in the ministry.

Equal partnership: Yet Paul is denounced by some among us as a male chauvinist. They claim that his instructions to the churches often oppress women. Didn't Paul lay down the law? "Women should keep silence in the churches" (1 Corinthians 14:34). What happened to that equal partnership? And so also on the question of the role of women in the church, Paul seems to alienate people on both ends of the debate.

The list of grievances goes on. To some people Paul comes across as arrogant, even to his friends, and caustic, especially toward his opponents. Some say that he defends himself too much: "You are witnesses, and God also, how pure, upright and blameless our conduct was toward you believers" (1 Thessalonians 2:10).

Besides all this, many people complain that Paul's letters are difficult to comprehend. They agree with the assessment in 2 Peter 3:16, "There are some things in them that are hard to understand." Others point out that Paul wrote to first-generation believers, who seem to have understood him.

Why do I still read Paul's letters? Wouldn't it be more Mennonite to stay with Jesus?

Paul counted himself among those who confess, "Jesus we know." Who then did Paul know himself to be? One who desired to know Christ and the power of his resurrection. Anticipating resurrection, Paul shared Christ's suffering (Philemon 3:10-11).

Paul was a pioneer. He went where Jesus never managed to go. After the risen Christ was revealed to him, Paul carried the message of God's reign to the cities of the Roman empire. Diligent, prayerful study of his letters to the churches that emerged in these cities will renew our church for our mission in our time.

We need to learn from Paul what it means to be both evangelical and socially concerned, both missionary and pastoral. And a contextual reading of his letters will also inspire both women and men to join him in this gospel partnership.

Jacob W. Elias is associate professor of New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

Confused about Paul: *"The Apostle Paul" by Rembrandt*

National Gallery of Art

We need to learn from Paul what it means to be both evangelical and socially concerned, both missionary and pastoral.

Inside the news

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MCC helps children who witnessed Hebron massacre / p. 16

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Life-term inmates study photography / p. 18

Health assembly disbands

Columbus, Ohio (*Gospel Herald*)—They came in record numbers. The 42nd annual Mennonite Health Assembly held here April 7-10 brought together more Mennonite and Brethren in Christ health-care professionals, students and pastors than ever. Even so, the 380 people attending voted to disband their organization.

What will be no more is the Mennonite Health Association (MHA), which planned the annual Mennonite Health Assembly. It also provided a way for special-interest groups, such as those for developmental disabilities and mental health, to relate to the broader church. The organization's two part-time staff members, both also currently employed by Mennonite Mutual Aid, will find new assignments, possibly with MMA.

With MHA disbanding, special-interest groups will relate to Mennonite Health Services, an umbrella group for Mennonite health institutions. In making its decision, MHA asked MHS to expand its services to involve more health-care organizations. MHA is also asking MMA to pick up health-care education and advocacy work.

Representing the Council of Moderators and Secretaries of several Mennonite and Brethren groups, James Lapp commended MHA for its move. "This will help give us a more focused voice on health care," he said.

MHA's move to disband also came in response to requests from the general boards of both the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church to simplify health structures and present a unified voice

White tells MMA, MCC to get act together

Columbus, Ohio (*Gospel Herald*)—Convention speeches often are not noted for major influence. One at the MHA annual gathering, however, had participants buzzing.

"Your lack of coordination will end up defeating both your goals," Jane White told representatives of Mennonite Mutual Aid and Mennonite Central Committee U.S. in a speech on health-care reform.

Introduced as "a Mennonite in Washington who does not represent a Mennonite institution," White commented on lobbying efforts by both organizations. She spoke out of her frequent contacts with members of Congress as executive editor of the quarterly journal, *Health Affairs.* White is also a member of First Mennonite Church in Hyattsville, Md.

White noted that MMA and MCC have two different messages—ones that "can be seen as opposites in Congress. Groups that band together on key issues command more attention," she said.

White said that MMA's position—calling for an exemption to allow MMA to offer health-care insurance under any reform proposal—"might come across as a plea for self-preservation."

Then noting that in Washington MCC equals Mennonite, White asked, "Did MCC process its position with the constituency?" MCC U.S. has testified before Congress that it favors a single-payment health-care plan, similar to the Canadian system.

Challenging the two organizations to lead the church in speaking with one voice, White said, "How we handle health-care reform will tell us much about who we are as a church. My hope is we do not capitulate to the divisive tactics that I see daily in Washington."

Vyron Schmidt of MMA told the MHA gathering that both MMA and MCC will work to draft a response to health-care reform that can represent a unified voice for the church. "We plan to bring a proposal that will allow us to work together in a variety of ways to push for universal health-care coverage," he said. *J. Lorne Peachey*

A firebomb hit the home of Gary and Jean Isaac, Mennonite missionaries in Transkei, South Africa, for the second time April 14. The first attack came March 29. No one was harmed in either incident. The April 14 firebomb crashed through a window of a guest house behind the Isaacs' house. The five bombs of the March 29 attack missed the house, landing in the yard (see *The Mennonite*, April 26, page 13). Leona Schrag of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission says she believes the attacks were not personal but reflect an anti-white sentiment building before the country's elections, set for April 26-28. The Isaacs are not planning to leave Transkei but are considering moving to a guest house in a more secure part of the city until after the elections. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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A shortage of railroad grain cars is affecting the food aid shipments of Mennonite Central Committee Canada. Ron Bietz, director of MCC Canada's food program, says a shipment of lentils for Sudan was delayed leaving Canada for four months due to the shortage as well as to ice in the St. Lawrence River. A shipment of 150 metric tons of prairie wheat for Ethiopia, scheduled to leave in May, will not depart until mid-summer. Shipments of other relief agencies are also experiencing delays.

On March 4, heavy rains in Peru's central sierra caused the Rimac River to overflow its banks, flooding more than five shantytowns in the central coastal city of Callao. Mennonite Central Committee has contributed $5,000 U.S./$6,780 Can. for flood relief in Peru. The flooding destroyed more than 440 homes, leaving some 2,600 people homeless and sleeping outdoors, says Blanca Urrutia Falconi, administrator of the Peruvian organization that will dispense the MCC money. Thousands more lost their possessions and were left destitute.

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Mennonite Central Committee Canada's peace and social concerns desk plans to publish a poetry and dramatic arts anthology. Short scripts and poems from a woman's perspective or experience in peace and justice will be adapted for performance. The anthology is intended as a worship resource and discussion starter. Submission deadline is May 31. Contact MCC Canada Peace and Social Concerns, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.

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Months after walking through the "100,000 Faces" display in June 1993 in Atlanta, a combat veteran who served on the front lines in the Persian Gulf War wrote to project planner Jennifer Lindberg. The display, made up of panels of faces created to call people to remember the 100,000 lives snuffed out in the war, traveled across Canada and the United States last year. "I wanted to share with you how your display has had a tremendous personal impact upon me, as well as to thank you and encourage you in your efforts," the veteran wrote. "After seeing your exhibit, the painful and traumatic memories I suppressed for two years surfaced, and I cried and cried at what I had done. ... After seeing your exhibit, I requested and was granted discharge, and am no longer in the service. I now spend many hours speaking with friends and former service buddies about the need to end male-initiated violence."

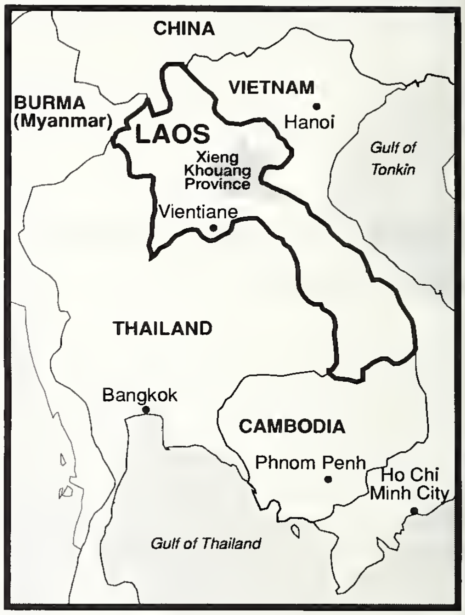
in health care, according to Dean Preheim-Bartel, MHA's executive secretary. "MHA is offering to give way to alternative structures ... in order to refocus health-care issues for the church," he told the Columbus gathering.

Preheim-Bartel assured participants that the annual assembly would continue. It will be co-sponsored by MHS and MMA.

After the decision to disband, U.S. health-care reform proved to be the topic of the four-day meeting (see box on page 13). *J. Lorne Peachey*

Million-dollar bomb removal starts in June

Laos



Michael Eby-Good (MCC)

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—In early April Titus Peachey headed for Laos to help coordinate the largest nonfood project MCC has ever undertaken: removing hundreds of thousands of decades-old unexploded bombs from northern Laos.

This is not Peachey's first experience in Laos. As he drove through Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City), Vietnam, on his way to teach English classes in the 1970s, he often saw U.S. planes with bombs tucked under their wings flying north. He pondered who would be on the receiving end.

In the early 1980s Peachey and Linda, his wife, went to Laos to serve as Mennonite Central Committee country representatives. There Peachey saw not only where some bombers had been headed but also the devastation they had caused.

From 1964 to 1973 the United States secretly rained 500,000 planeloads of bombs on Laos in an attempt to cut off supplies and assistance to the North Vietnamese. An undetermined number of bombs were defective and did not explode on impact.

Today more than 123,500 acres of land in northern Laos are infested with

Holding on: *Mrs. Tu Va Chao holds one of her surviving children. On Nov. 22, 1993, the four Tu Va Chao children were walking along a street on the edge of Phonsavanh, Xieng Khouang province's capital, taking the water buffalo to pasture. Kou Ya, 4, and Sia Ya, 6, noticed a round object in the ditch that looked like the balls they toss during New Year festivities. Sia Ya threw the "ball" to her brother. He couldn't catch it and it landed behind him, exploding and killing him instantly. Sia Ya died after two days and nights in the provincial hospital.*

John Lecklin (MCC)

live, baseball-size anti-personnel bombs, known locally as "bombies."

Mines Advisory Group, a British humanitarian agency with ordnance disposal programs in Cambodia and Afghanistan, is providing technical expertise to the project. Peachey, who speaks fluent Lao, is serving as project liaison between MCC/MAG personnel, the Laotian government and affected communities. He is also working with MAG to coordinate the importation of generators, vehicles, computers and other equipment into Laos and on into the remote Xieng Khouang province.

To finance the $1 million U.S./$1.4 million Can. price tag for the first year, MCC is asking its constituency for $300,000 U.S./$418,000 Can. MCC has also received money from funding organizations, including the New York-based Christopher Reynolds Foundation and the Canadian Council for International Cooperation. MAG has applied for grants from World Vision and Save the Children-U.K.

Peachey points out that although the cost of bomb removal seems high, the U.S. military spent some $10 billion U.S./$13.9 billion Can. bombing Laos.

At the end of the first year MCC, MAG and the Laotian government will assess the project and decide on future direction. It will likely take several years to clear the bombs from Xieng Khouang province's villages and fields. Live ordnance is a problem in other regions of Laos as well, including the former Ho Chi Minh Trail area that borders Vietnam.

"It is up to us to try to prevent this from happening again," Peachey says. He says the United States dropped cluster bombs during the 1991 Persian Gulf War that were technologically more complex than those used in Laos.

Peachey will work in Laos for about six months while on leave from his job as co-director of MCC U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries. *Pearl Sensenig*

Farm tips: How to clear your field of bombs

Xieng Khouang province, Laos (MCC)—Last year Mr. Bouavanh Maneevong purchased an additional 7,000 square meters/ 8,400 square yards of land so he could grow more rice to feed his family.

Bouavanh and a friend set out to clear the new land by the only method available. They removed bombies by hand.

First they dug a large hole at the edge of the land. They scoured the field and in three days located 45 bombies.

"We picked up the bombies, being careful not to rotate them, and carried them to the hole," he explains. There they used a generator to explode them.

Nobody was hurt. Bouavanh, however, says the bombies are unpredictable. "You can hit some bombies with a hoe 20 times before they will explode. Sometimes you can even pick them up and throw them three or four times. But other times, just one touch will cause a bombie to explode."

In February Mr. Bouavanh took visitors to his now-fallow field to explain how he had removed the bombies. As he looked about for a stone to demonstrate his technique, he and the visitors discovered another bombie protruding from the ground about 15 centimeters /6 inches from his foot. *Pearl Sensenig*

MCEC boasts bulging pockets, sets policy

Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. (*Mennonite Reporter*)—Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada delegates debated how to spend a financial surplus and how to manage conflict of interest at meetings here April 8-9.

Congregations had responded to a year-end appeal with $25,000 above-budget contributions. This, plus underspending, left a $74,000 surplus.

Partly because of the positive financial picture, the executive board announced it will not cut the peace, justice and social concerns coordinator position, as decided last summer.

The debate then centered on a proposal from the finance commission to put $50,000 of the surplus toward the mortgage on the new conference office.

Some delegates wanted to use the surplus to restore earlier program cuts, for example, in youth ministry or

Ontario Mennonite Music Camp will be held Aug. 14-26 at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont. The camp is for people ages 12 to 15. For more information contact the college at (519) 885-0220, ext. #0.

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Seventy people attended a conference for exploring vocational ministry held March 21 in Hesston, Kan. Sponsors included Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Bethel College, Great Plains Seminary Education Program, Hesston College, South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church and Western District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church. "It was a seed-planting event," said Dorothy Nickel Friesen, assistant dean at AMBS. "It reconfirmed pastoral ministry as a challenging, rewarding vocation."

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Mennonite Central Committee has given $10,000 U.S./$13,900 Can. to aid African church efforts to stop the violence wracking Rwanda and Burundi. The All Africa Conference of Churches, a Nairobi, Kenya-based organization, will use the funds to help church leaders look for short- and long-term resolutions to the current conflict. The Hutu, the major ethnic group in Rwanda and Burundi, and the minority Tutsi group have been in conflict for decades. In the last year MCC provided $10,000 U.S./ $13,900 Can. to the Church of Uganda for aid to Rwandans who had fled to southern Uganda. Violence exploded in Rwanda in April when the presidents of both Rwanda and Burundi died in a plane crash. Rwanda and Burundi were ruled first by Germany and then by Belgium. Colonial rulers favored the minority Tutsi over the Hutu, creating resentment. However, AACC staff say victims of the killing spree in Rwanda appear to include both Hutu and Tutsi. "All Rwanda is bleeding," said Archbishop Desmond Tutu, AACC president.

J. Tyler Klassen

Marlin E. Miller, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, pitches in for the seminary's April 2 "Building Blitz." Workers from 24 congregations helped tear out parts of the dormitory and construct an addition to the dorm and a maintenance building.

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Cedric Boehr, a self-employed contractor in Whitewater, Kan., got some unexpected help when a March 19 windstorm badly damaged a house he was building for a client. It wasn't his first delay. At Butler County hearings about 30 people came to protest the building, saying the land should remain agricultural. Saturday evening Olin Claassen, an opponent of the house, called to ask if Boehr wanted some help repairing the house. On Monday morning he arrived with about 30 men to fix the damage. (*The Wichita Eagle*)

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***With* magazine has named five contributing editors: Sena Friesen, Winston-Salem, N.C.; Greg Hatcher, Seattle; Helen Grace Lescheid, Abbotsford, B.C.; Laurie Oswald, Staten Island, N.Y.; and Mary Perham, Horseheads, N.Y. The five attended a workshop last year in Newton, Kan., sponsored by the magazine. The group met again this year for more training. "When we scheduled our first *With* writers workshop, we never dreamed that all five writers would become such key players on the *With* team," said co-editor Eddy Hall.**

mission. Others were unhappy with the choice of office location and called for more accountability on expenditures for the new facility. In the end the commission proposal passed by a large majority.

Conflict of interest: The conflict of interest discussion focused on a proposed policy statement. At last spring's sessions, delegates overturned an executive board decision calling moderator Ron Sawatsky to resign after he became an administrator at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ont. Last spring delegates decided that Sawatsky should complete his first three-year term and called for the conflict of interest statement.

Debate centered on this clause: "Employees of the conference, or of those organizations in which the conference appoints or elects the majority of the board of governing unit, and contributes one half or more of the budget, will not hold any elected or appointed position in the conference."

Harold Peters-Fransen of London, Ont., proposed that "and" be changed to "and/or." The change would have disqualified Conrad Grebel College faculty or staff from holding conference positions.

The amendment was defeated. Delegates argued that the policy provides for enough checks and balances. Later at the conference Sawatsky was elected for a second three-year term as moderator.

Conrad Grebel College reported some of the results of its two-year strategic planning process. Due to financial difficulties, one faculty and one secretarial position have been cut.

In its report the college did not announce which faculty position was cut. Leonard Friesen, a history professor at the college, says he received a letter in February terminating his contract as of June 30, 1995.

Some of these details came out in the open discussion at conference as Dave Tiessen of Guelph, Ont., questioned how the termination was handled. He suggested that the conference appoint an external board of inquiry.

In another reporting seminar, the Theological Concerns Council was asked how it will help congregations dialogue on homosexual concerns. "Is the process open-ended?" asked David Janzen of Niagara-on-the-Lake. "Or do we follow the statements adopted by both the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church? [These statements did not pass moral judgment on homosexual orientation but called homosexual sexual activity sin, saying homosexuals should remain celibate.] If so, then the task is to teach and correct those who do not agree with the position."

Sue Goerzen of Harrow, Ont., who had served on the church-wide human sexuality task force, said that the denominational statements also made a commitment to continue dialogue with gays and lesbians.

In other business, delegates

- welcomed three representatives—Lucie and Marcel Gilbert and Marcel St. Denis—from the Covenant of Salt Church, La Sarre, Quebec (The church was accepted as an emerging congregation. Church representatives said they chose to join a Mennonite conference as a mediating alternative between Catholics and Pentecostals.),
- decided that the MCEC congregations that have been associate members of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada since 1988 will become full members in the summer of 1995, provided some funding issues as well as the potential competition between Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Conrad Grebel College are sorted out,
- agreed to delay joining the binational Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church until fall 1995. *Ron Rempel*

MCC helps child survivors of massacre

Hebron, West Bank (MCC)—Children who were at Hebron's Al-Ibrahimi Mosque on Feb. 25 when a Jewish settler gunned down worshipers are receiving counseling from a program supported by Mennonite Central Committee.

Beit Sahour (West Bank) YMCA, an MCC partner, has organized a counseling program for the traumatized survivors. Palestinian mental health experts are carrying out the project. MCC has provided $20,000 U.S./$27,875 Can. for the program.

The program's primary target group is the 50 or so children under 14 who were in the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque on the day of the massacre, in which at least

29 Palestinians died, and many others were wounded.

Rifat Odeh Kassis of the Beit Sahour YMCA says the team has located 21 of the children who were in the mosque that morning.

Nidal, 12, had accompanied his father to the mosque along with his younger brothers Kiffah and Islam. During the shooting Kiffah, 9, was killed. Nidal's father was wounded.

Holding up a copy of AlQuds newspaper, Nidal says, "This is a picture of my classmate. He died. And this is the picture of the newspaper seller—he also died."

Nidal alternates between tearfulness and anxiety. "I remember my brother Kiffah the most when I go to bed. We used to whisper together at night. I do not believe that Kiffah has died. I turn to tell him something at night—but Kiffah is not there."

Leila Atsham, the project's clinical counseling supervisor, says the children's feelings fluctuate between intense sadness, frustration and anger. Even weeks after the massacre they are afraid to venture far from their homes and families, and some are still too scared to return to school, she says.

She says families are now suffering from post-traumatic stress disorders. Parents continue to experience guilt and anxiety for having led their families to the mosque on the morning of the massacre. "They feel they failed to protect their children," Atsham says. "Marital discord has erupted as fathers and mothers blame one another for having taken children to the mosque. Perhaps most tragically, families feel abandoned by God, whom they believe has punished them for reasons they do not understand."

Other victims have already shown

Wednesday night noodle study

Crystal Enz, 12, of First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., wrote The Mennonite *to share how her Wednesday night teacher helped her learn the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30).*

She gave each of us $10 and told us to double it. I worked with Rachel Regier and Kristen Abrahams. We put our $30 together and planned a bake sale to double our money for Mennonite Central Committee.

We bought flour, sugar and eggs, and then we each baked zwie-back, rolls, brownies and carmel popcorn. After we had baked all our goods, we got together on Wednesday night. We have a friendship meal at the church every other week. As the people came they each thought it was for a good cause and they bought something that looked good.

At the end of the night we had nothing left over. From the 45 items we made over $75 for Mennonite Central Committee.

That is when we decided to go for $100. The next Saturday we got together and made varenike and egg noodles. They were a hit, and we made $149. The Lord works in different ways and helped raise money for MCC.

Mary Enz

Noodle talents: *Crystal Enz studies the Bible by making egg noodles.*

Robert Regier, professor emeritus of art at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., attended a retreat Jan. 23-25 in Port Deposit, Md., to discuss a new permanent exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution's Natural History Museum. Staff at the museum invited Regier to brainstorm plans for the exhibit, which will examine the concept of change in natural and human systems.

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Seventeen other church-related relief and development agencies have joined Mennonite Central Committee Alberta in deciding not to take money from the Alberta government that comes from lottery revenues. MCC estimates the decision cost as much as $24,000. Reaction to the decision has been mixed, says MCC Alberta executive director Dick Neufeld. "It's fair to say that Alberta Mennonites are divided on this question," he said. To date, $800 has been donated by people who have specifically mentioned the decision not to take lottery funds as a reason for giving to MCC.

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The Samambaia congregation located outside Brasilia, Brazil, hosted a party March 26 to raise the roof of its new meetinghouse. "We were able to have the celebration in our new building, even though we haven't taken official possession of it yet," wrote Steve Plenert, Commission on Overseas Mission worker in Samambaia. The new congregation had been meeting on a porch. When the group grew to more than 20, the porch got crowded. Plenert and Pastor Pereira of the Ceilandia church found the land and building only days before the planned anniversary celebration. "The building has a good roof on it and has enough space to comfortably fit 50 or more people," Plenert reported. Mennonite Board of Missions and COM are joint supporters of the Evangelical Association of Mennonites in Brazil. Together, COM and MBM committed $5,000 to the purchase of the building.

Eleven priests, religious workers and activists began a 40-day fast April 11 on the front steps of the U.S. Capitol to protest the School of the Americas. The school is a U.S. training school for Latin American military officers. Many human rights violations have been traced to graduates of the school. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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The Heartland Peace Tax Fund, based in Newton, Kan., has issued grants of $250 to three service agencies: the Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Association of Harvey County and Offender Victim Ministries in Newton and the Samaritan Counseling Center in Hutchinson, Kan. The fund began a year ago with contributions from people wishing to resist war taxes.

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San Antonio (Texas) Mennonite Church helped sponsor the "Let Justice Roll!" tour March 4. Jim Wallis, a pastor and activist from Washington, and Ken Medema, a musician and composer with Briar Patch Music in Grandville, Mich., spoke and sang at Trinity University in San Antonio, calling the audience to "restore the integrity of the Word of God." Wallis said, "It's not that the kids haven't gotten our values. It's that they *have*. They are pursuing the values that we've contrived." La Casa de Maria y Marta, a service/learning center in San Antonio sponsored by Mennonite Board of Missions, hosted Wallis and Medema. The two also attended a Saturday breakfast at the church to support the San Antonio Peacemaking Conference on Gang Violence, held April 8-10. Mediators who came to the conference also stayed at La Casa. The conference resulted in truces between four west side San Antonio gangs and is being followed up by weekly meetings.

such dysfunctional coping responses as lack of fear in violent situations, extreme desire for revenge, numbness and insecurity, she says.

Through psychosocial counseling appropriate to children, such as family and play therapy, Atsham and her co-workers hope to lessen the traumatic impact of the massacre and to prevent what she terms the "re-victimization" of the survivors. As a longer-term strategy the rehabilitation team also plans to train professionals in the Hebron community, such as school teachers and child-care workers, to identify trauma symptoms and help children cope with emotions from violence they have witnessed or experienced.

Nidal's mother says, "Since the massacre Leila has been the closest to me and the most supportive. She has been closer to me even than my own mother and father." *Chip Poston*

Lifers find expression in photography

Muncy, Pa. (MCC)—Six women lifers from the state prison here learned in a photography course taught by Howard Zehr, director of the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Office of Crime and Justice, how black and white film can capture and express emotion.

The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts funded the course and a similar one with men serving life sentences at the Graterford prison in Philadelphia. Zehr served as artist-in-residence at the facilities while on a two-month sabbatical.

"When I look at this portrait I see someone asking, 'When will I find relief for my pain?' I see someone in need of a friend to talk to her," Sherri Robinson says thoughtfully as she ponders a photo she took of another woman lifer. "I used sidelighting to take the photo because I wanted her face in both light and dark, to show both her hidden and open parts."

Robinson and Marie Scott, escorted by several guards, were permitted to attend a March 6 open house for an exhibit of their work at the Muncy Public Library.

Of the photos Scott took for the course, her favorite is a collage showing children and a copy of State Resolution 71. Scott wrote the resolution and has been advocating for its passage by the Pennsylvania legislature; it will provide for a study of the needs of children of incarcerated parents.

Scott believes society should focus on the needs of children at risk so they do not end up as she did. The concern is close to her—her own 13-year-old daughter has recently become involved with an 18-year-old drug dealer.

Scott's involvement is not unusual, says Mary Leftridge Byrd, superintendent of the Muncy prison. Byrd, who has worked at both men's and women's corrections facilities, says, "Women have a greater propensity to want to give back to the community, whether or not they are recognized for what they do."

The six women who took the course have expressed profound gratitude to Zehr. "Thank you so much for treating me like a person that's alive," one wrote to Zehr.

Robinson wrote, "Thank you for everything you have shown me, most of all for letting me know a little bit more about myself."

This was one of Zehr's purposes. "Through taking a photograph," Zehr says, "not only do you get a reflection of the person in the photo but you also get a mirror image of yourself." *Emily Will*

Focus on life: *Howard Zehr, bottom left, taught photography to six women serving life sentences in Muncy. Clockwise from upper left: Gaye Morley, Leticia Denise Smallwood, Marie Scott, Trina Garnett, Marilyn Dobrolenski and Sherri Robinson.*

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DEATHS

Stanley Fretz, Grace Church, Lansdale, Pa., died March 31 in a drowning accident. He had been a member of the Germantown (Pa.) Mennonite Church Corporation since 1953 and was Eastern District Conference representative on the Bluffton (Ohio) College board of trustees.

Robert W. Hartzler, Eighth Street Church, Goshen, Ind., died of cancer April 2. He was 74. Hartzler served pastorates at Silver Street (now Silverwood) Church in Goshen and Eighth Street Church. He was the first administrator for both Greencroft retirement community and Oaklawn Psychiatric Center in Goshen and was instrumental in the creation of Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich.

MINISTERS

Robin K. LaRue is serving as interim lead pastor at First Church, Berne, Ind. **Jason Martin** has ended as interim pastor there.

Richard White is serving as pastor at First Church, Huntingdon Valley, Pa.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., hosted a conference, "Nonviolent America: The Teaching Task," March 24-26. Participants discussed case studies of how to teach particular events in American history from a peace perspective. Co-sponsors of the event included Bethel College, the Kansas Peace Institute, Mennonite Central Committee and the Western District Conference Historical Committee.

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Edmonton (Alta.) Recycling Society has been commended for its marketing of recycled products. Glenda Gies of Toronto-based Recycling Development Corp. and chair of the Recycling Council of Ontario, said in the March 11 *Financial Post* that the society is "a model for recyclers across Canada in terms of its aggressive marketing of recycled material." In 1992 the society had a $370,000 operating surplus. The 1993 surplus is projected at $479,000. "We're motivated by a humanitarian cause but driven by the profit motive," says ERS director Cornelius Guenter. ERS was founded by Mennonite Central Committee Canada and MCC Alberta. One-quarter of its 70 employees are physically or mentally disabled or have been hard to employ in the past.

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In January, 12 members of the Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church spent 10 days in Brownsville, Texas, working with a home-repair program through the local Mennonite church, Iglesia Menonita del Cordero, and Mennonite Board of Missions Voluntary Service. Several years ago, members of the Floradale Church decided to undertake annual intergenerational service and learning outings. They have gone to Labrador, Winnipeg and Miami. In 1995 the church will send a group to Kentucky to work with the Serving With Appalachian People program.

Rental apartments available in Chicago area. Two large, pleasant two-bedroom apartments in Evanston, Ill., available mid-summer. In Evanston Mennonite Church building, a six-flat with garages. Most residents are active to some degree in the congregation, and all share in some building upkeep responsibilities. In South Evanston, with easy access to Northwestern University and downtown Chicago. Public transportation nearby. Very reasonable rent.

Call **(708) 492-1458** for information.

Goshen College has an opening for a part-time **career services assistant**. Applicant will work with college seniors in the development of resumés and in connecting them with companies and agencies. Recognizing this is a part-time position, the college will consider adding further responsibilities toward a full load depending on applicant's interest and qualifications. Minority people encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resumé and the names of three references to **Norman Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.** Application deadline: **May 15.**

Director, long-term stewardship cultivation project. This is a new cooperative program sponsored by the General Conference Mennonite and Mennonite churches; it is being funded by MMA, GCMC, MC and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. The office will be located in Elkhart, Ind.

The candidate should have experience in stewardship education and a background in theological studies; financial development work also helpful. Proven administrative skills, familiarity with sponsoring Mennonite denominations, commitment to Mennonite/Anabaptist values, good communication skills and willingness to travel are also important.

The position is available immediately and is projected as a full-time position at least through 1998.

Please respond **by June 1** to **Stanley Kropf, 421 S. 2nd St., Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516, (219) 294-7131** for additional information.

Locust Grove Mennonite School, with an enrollment of 435 in kindergarten through eighth grade, is currently accepting applications for **teaching positions in first and third grade**, which will begin in August.

Candidates are invited to request an application by contacting **Dave Helmus** at the school, **2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576; (717) 394-7107; fax (717) 394-4944.**

Lombard Mennonite Church, Lombard, Ill., seeks **youth minister**. Mature, self-motivated individual eager to provide leadership and nurturing love for our high school youth. Strong organizational and relational skills a must. Experience with youth preferred. Position available July 1.

Submit resumé and references **by April 30** to **Carol Bohnert, Lombard Mennonite Church, 528 E. Madison, Lombard, IL 60148; (708) 495-0132; fax (708) 627-9893.**

Goshen College seeks applicants for **college physician** beginning Aug. 1. Qualifications include an M.D., medical staff eligibility at Goshen Hospital, residency in family practice with experience in one or more of the following: college health, public health, international medicine or internal medicine. Responsibilities include supervising medical services to students, promoting a philosophy of holistic health care and possibly teaching. This position is one-third time at Goshen College. However, it could be combined with a private practice. Minority people encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resumé and the names of three references to **Norman Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.** Application deadline: **June 1.**

Goshen College announces an opening for **cross-country coach (men and women) and men's track coach.** Part-time position beginning July 1994 for the 1994-95 academic year and beyond. Planning and recruitment work would start earlier. Responsibilities include coaching and developing the cross-country and men's track programs; recruiting quality student athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; planning, organizing and implementing budget and schedule. Master's degree preferred. Instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the collegiate level. Review of applications has begun and will continue until the position is filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resumé and three professional references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.**

Bluffton College seeks an education generalist with Ph.D. or Ed.D. (master's considered) in **special education** or **elementary/middle school education** curriculum and instruction. The successful candidate will teach learning disabilities, developmental handicaps and other elementary and secondary education courses such as Introduction to Teaching and Classroom Management. Graduate-level teaching experience preferred; evidence or promise of teaching excellence is essential. Full-time, tenure-track position begins fall 1994 or 1995. Screening begins May 15. Women and minority applicants are especially welcome.

Reply to **William J. Hawk, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196; (419) 358-3317.**

Bluffton College seeks a **cataloger/circulation librarian** with an MLS from an ALA-accredited institution; two years experience with OCLC and knowledge of AACR2, LCSH and LC classification. The successful candidate will manage all cataloging functions with mostly copy cataloging and supervising one paraprofessional assistant; supervise the circulation system and annual inventory and manage materials processing and catalog maintenance; assist in preparing for library automation and work one night per week while rotating on weekend duty as reference librarian. Full-time, non-tenure track position begins as soon as available but not later than fall 1994. Screening begins May 15. Women and minority applicants are especially welcome.

Reply to **William J. Hawk, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196; (419) 358-3317.**

Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., is seeking a **full-time, associate-level pastor** whose role in a three-person pastoral team will emphasize ministry to youth, young adults and young families through all areas of ministry, including youth and young adult program development and support, preaching, worship planning, teaching and counseling/visitation. Seminary degree and service experience desirable. Beginning date in summer or fall 1994.

Send letter of inquiry and resumé or Ministerial Leadership Information Form to **Doug Penner, Pastoral Search Committee, Bethel College Mennonite Church, 2600 College Ave., North Newton, KS 67117.** Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled.

Goshen College announces an opening for **head coach of men's basketball.** Part-time position beginning July 1994 for the 1994-95 academic year and beyond. Planning and recruitment work would start earlier. Responsibilities include coaching and developing the men's basketball program; recruiting quality student athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; planning, organizing and implementing budget and schedule. Master's degree preferred. Instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the collegiate level. Review of applications has begun and will continue until the position is filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resumé and three professional references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.**

Freeman Academy invites applications for a full-time **administrator.** Must have secondary principal certificate or be willing to pursue this endorsement. Freeman Academy, a member of the Mennonite Secondary Education Council, is a Christian middle school and high school offering grades 5 to 12. Starting date: **July 1.**

To apply or receive more information, contact **Freeman Academy Search Committee, Everett Waltner, Chair, Route 3 Box 32A, Freeman, SD 57029; (605) 925-7766.**

Positions open at **Freeman Academy** for 1994-95:
1. **Bible teacher and campus pastor**, full time
2. **Development director**, part time
3. **Spanish teacher**, part time

All positions open until filled. Freeman Academy is a Christian school, grades 5 to 12, affiliated with the General Conference Mennonite Church.

To apply, send letter and credentials to **Leroy Saner, Principal, Freeman Academy, Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029; (605) 925-4237.**

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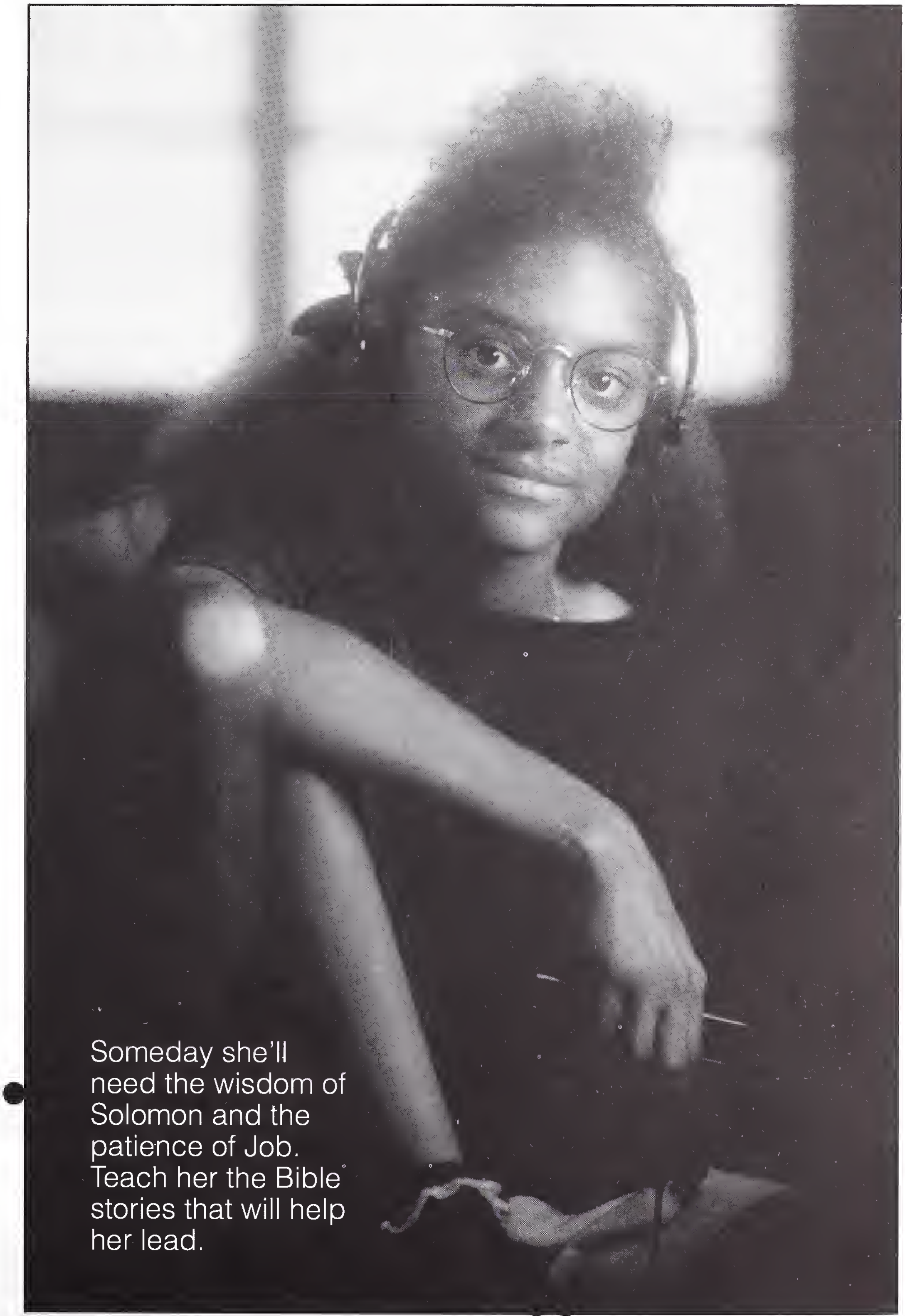

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Reviews

BOOKS

Provocative intuitions

New Dimensions in American Religious History, *edited by Jay P. Dolan and James P. Wind (Eerdmans, 1993, 327 pages)*

Reviewed by James C. Juhnke, North Newton, Kan.

In this volume 12 disciples of Martin Marty (three women and nine men) pay tribute to their mentor with scholarly essays about different dimensions of American religious history. Marty, distinguished professor of church history at the University of Chicago, has been an astonishingly imaginative and productive scholar. He has combined the best gifts (and more) of, say, the Mennonite scholars Robert Kreider and Cornelius J. Dyck. Marty has written more than 40 books and has spun off hundreds of provocative research suggestions for his students and readers to investigate.

The essays in *New Dimensions* pursue some of Marty's provocative intuitions. They are forays into new and diverse frontiers rather than building blocks toward a unified work. Here we can read well-crafted writings about hymnody, herbal medicines, brief biographies of religious women and new ways of seeing American Catholic history.

The first five essays fit loosely under the rubric of "public religion." The topics range from the civil religious significance of murals in the Boston Public Library, to American Protestantism in Japan from 1923 to 1940, to religious dimensions of America's public arguments about health issues. The latter essay, by James P. Wind of the Lilly Endowment, provides excellent historical and religious context for the current national debate on health insurance.

Perhaps of greatest interest to Mennonite scholars will be the final three essays on religious fundamentalism. R. Scott Appleby, who has worked with Marty in the massive "Fundamentalism Project" of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, says American fundamentalism is "a subculture within a subculture." Perhaps his concept of "fundamentalism of the enclave" has some applicability for Mennonite history. In any case, this Martin Marty "festschrift" is a good guide to the creative thinking of some of the best minds working on American religious history.

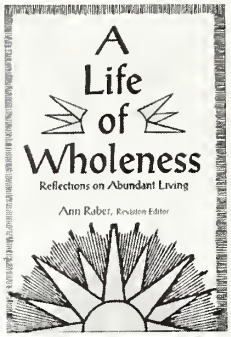
Live life abundantly

A Life of Wholeness: Reflections on Abundant Living, *edited by Ann Raber (Herald Press, 1993, 159 pages)*

Reviewed by Faith Hershberger Penner, Ames, Iowa

Most of us would not hold ourselves up as models of wholeness. We fall short, whether because of poor dietary or exercise habits, inadequate prayer and devotional time, too many commitments, frazzled family relationships or misuse of the earth's resources.

Mennonite Mutual Aid, the sponsor of this book, includes an array of subjects under the themes of wellness and wholeness. Authors include the executive secretary of MMA, as well as a professor of nursing, a pastor, a director of pastoral care and education at a medical center, and a writer.



A Life of Wholeness presents a convincing argument for the unity of body and spirit, through the use of current medical knowledge, historical perspective and theology. It shows that not only our personal well-being but also the larger community are affected by our beliefs, emotions and relationships.

Most of the chapters lead readers from looking at themselves as individuals to their relationships with their families, communities and the world. So, for example, the chapter on nutrition, after giving some dietary do's and don'ts, discusses how highly processed foods and eating away from home impact our families and communities, and ends with a prayer of forgiveness for taking our gifts for granted and not sharing with the world's poor. Each chapter ends with a list of discussion questions. An appendix lays out a 10-page "wholeness assessment" that readers are encouraged to take individually and in a group.

The least interesting sections are those dealing with health information that is common knowledge to anyone who reads about diet, physical fitness

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or substance abuse. The information is accurately presented but tells the informed reader nothing new. These topics are understandably included so that the more obvious aspects of wellness are not ignored.

The strength of this book lies in its emphasis on both spiritual and physical wholeness. It gives a theological underpinning to our need to care for our bodies and challenges us to look beyond ourselves to our relationship with God and others. I came away from the book inspired to make some changes in my life.

The Kleine Gemeinde

Family, Church and Market: A Mennonite Community in the Old and the New Worlds, 1850-1930, *Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial Series, No. 6, by Royden K. Loewen (University of Illinois Press, 1993, 370 pages)*

Reviewed by Steve Estes, Chenoa, Ill.

In this fascinating, densely-packed yet readable volume, Royden K. Loewen of the University of Manitoba attempts to give a social history of the Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites in three settings during the critical period from 1850 to 1930.

Loewen looks at three interrelated social schemes in which the Kleine Gemeinde moved to Russia, Canada and the United States. He shows how the family served as the primary social unit interacting with a congregational ecclesiology and a market economy. Traditionally Mennonite histories have been organized around churchly developments and unique traits of Mennonite culture that have separated Mennonites from other immigrant groups.

From the perspective of rural social history, Loewen focuses his study on themes of the household economy, gender roles, social networks, laypeople's views of life and stratification within the community. Loewen shows how the religious ideals and household-based economies of the Kleine Gemeinde influenced relationships with the marketplace, while at the same time the marketplace helped form religious ideals and social structure. He shows how judicious interaction with the market economy could be seen to bolster "separation from the world."

The story begins in 1850 in Russia and shows the life of the Kleine Gemeinde in the context in New Russia (now Ukraine), the relocation to a new colony in 1865 and the challenges of Russification. Beginning in 1874, virtually the entire Kleine Gemeinde immigrated to the western plains of Manitoba and Nebraska. The immigrants sought to replicate their "old world" in the new world of North America. At first the Nebraskans reproduced their New Russian standard of living quickly, but by the second generation they faced a closing economy that forced many people into alternative urban occupations. The slower economy of Manitoba ultimately led to a more controlled integration with the outside world and the maintenance of the Kleine Gemeinde as a cohesive group.

The author has provided extensive and insightful notes as well as a thorough bibliography. The index is helpful. *Family, Church and Market* provides a high standard for Mennonite history. It is a story of faith and of a faith community, but it is a story of faith that was lived not only in church, but in the essence of life as people experienced it.

Resources

- **Der Bote—special English edition**, Oct. 31, 1993, chronicles events in 1943 when about 500 Mennonite villages in East Prussia, Danzig and U.d.S.S.R. were forcibly evacuated; also recounts major migrations of the 1870s, 1920s, 1940s and 1970s. Order by **the end of May** from *Der Bote* (English edition), 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4; (204) 888-6781; $4 Can./$5 U.S. (includes postage).
- **The Anabaptist Writings of David Joris, 1535-1543** by Gary K. Waite (Herald Press, 1994, $39.95 U.S./$51.95 Can.) is volume 7 in the Classics of the Radical Reformation Series.
- **We Knew Jesus** by Marian Hostetler (Herald Press, 1994, $5.95 U.S./$7.75 Can.) contains 14 stories, told by "Dr. Luke," of young people who meet Jesus. For ages 9 to 13, grades 4 to 8, teachers and parents.
- **Ashirwad: Blessings in India** (Mennonite Central Committee, 1993, seven-minute VHS videocassette) is the story of a group of Hindu, Muslim and Christian craftswomen in Calcutta who make and sell ornaments, kits and wall hangings through Self-Help Crafts. "Ashirwad" means "blessings" in Hindi.
- **A Guide to the New Testament World** by Albert A. Bell Jr. (Herald Press, 1994, $15.95 U.S./$20.95 Can.) provides pictures of what life in New Testament times was like.
- **A Middle East Reader**, which contains information about the region's countries, major religions and conflicts, and a section on biblical prophecy, is available free from Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, or from MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.
- **Family Violence** by Melissa A. Miller (Herald Press, 1994, $9.95 U.S./ $12.95 Can.) guides readers through issues such as survivor's healing, power dynamics in the family, congregational response and faith questions. Includes study questions and resources.
- **Things They Never Taught You in Seminary** by Deborah and James Bushfield (Herald Press, 1994, $8.95 U.S./$11.75 Can.) offers practical guidance for challenges of pastoral life, including getting a raise, setting personal boundaries, revitalizing vision for ministry.
- **That All May Worship** (Religion and Disability Program, National Organization on Disability, 910-16th St. NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20006; $10 U.S.) is an interfaith handbook to assist congregations in welcoming people with disabilities.
- **Longing for God: Prayer and the Rhythms of Life** by Glandion Carney and William Long (InterVarsity, 1994, $10.99 U.S.) offers meditations on 30 powerful prayers found in the Bible.
- **Letters to My Children: A Father Passes on His Values** by Daniel Taylor (InterVarsity, 1994, $9.99 U.S.) explores basic values that parents want to teach their children.
- **Accountable Leadership: Resources for Worshipping Communities** by Paul Chaffee (ChurchCare Publishing, (800) 230-4635 or (415) 775-4635, $12.95 U.S.) explores the ethical, legal and financial responsibilities of lay and clergy leaders.

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Editorial

Jesus saves

Salvation is more than a ticket to heaven. And if the church is in the salvation business, then it needs to begin paying more attention to the health needs of its members and of others.

Read the Gospels or the Book of Acts. You find many stories of healing. Jesus touches a person with a skin disease or one who is blind. They gain health and are restored to relationships they had lost before. They are saved.

The Hebrew word "shalem" (health) is related to the word "shalom" (peace or wholeness). The Greek word "soteria" (salvation) come from a root meaning "alive and well." In biblical parlance, salvation involves not only people's eternal destiny but their bodily health, their social relationships, their freedom from evil forces.

After healing the crippled beggar (Acts 3), Peter and John confront the people with news of Jesus' resurrection and call them to repent. The rulers promptly arrest the two apostles and ask who gave them authority to heal this man. Peter replies, "There is salvation in no one else [than Jesus]." About "salvation" *The HarperCollins Study Bible* has this note: "*Salvation* refers both to the physical healing of the lame man and to salvation from judgment or from the service of false gods."

For Jesus and for the early church, health care was a priority. What about for us in the church today?

We greet each other with a glib "How ya doin'?"

"Pretty good. You?"

"Not bad."

But how are we really? If we are honest and take a full account of ourselves, we may have to admit that we have some aches and pains, we've developed some habits that probably aren't doing us much good, we get lonely sometimes, we're busier than we'd like to be, we don't like our work, and if we really think about it, we feel guilty about how much we consume while others in the world don't have enough to live.

Is the church addressing these concerns? Or is it merely a formality in our lives? Do we only tell our doctors about those aches and pains? Do we pick up a couple of self-help books to deal with the doldrums? Are we afraid to mention such concerns to our brothers and sisters in church?

My guess is that many of us—especially those of us over 40—have health problems that require regular care. Concern about our health consumes much of our time and, for those of us in the United States, a good deal of our money. Yet the church does not address these concerns with much energy.

Spiritual healing: Canadian author Tom Harpur in his book *The Uncommon Touch* investigates spiritual healing and says that churches have largely abandoned being involved with physical and emotional health. Yet there is a growing hunger in our society for such spiritual healing, he says. The church is missing a great opportunity.

Willard Krabill, writing for the health dialogue steering committee, echoes Harpur's concerns (see the article on page 3). We have the chance to get back to our roots, to be a healing presence in our societies, whether that means being involved in the health-care debate in the United States or giving more attention to issues of spiritual healing in our churches.

Over three years ago my congregation, New Creation Fellowship, helped in forming a local health ministry that provides basic health care for people who are uninsured. Local doctors, dentists and others volunteer a half day per week of service, and a coordinator is supported through grants and donated funds. The response has shown that there is a huge need for such ministries.

It may sound odd to Canadians, but millions of U.S. citizens are without any health insurance. Surely we in the church need to address such a need. Krabill offers some perspectives on what values we need to bring to the conversation about health care. One bottom-line value that seems much more alive in Canada but flies in the face of today's American values is a commitment to justice and the common good rather than to self-interest.

We need to follow the example of Jesus and the early church in offering God's salvation to people, a salvation that includes both physical and emotional health. *Gordon Houser*

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For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 10
MAY 24, 1994

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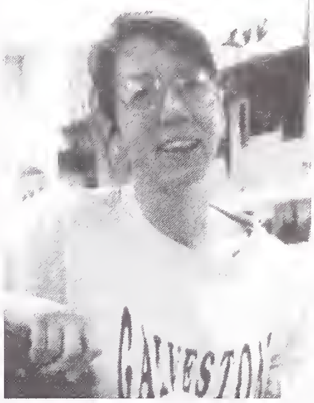
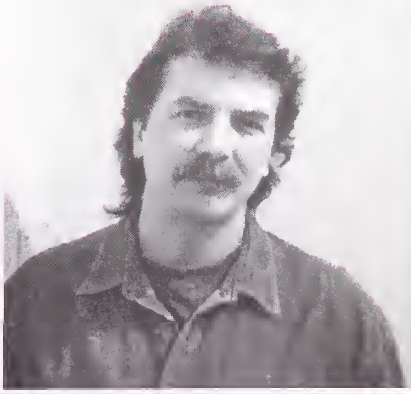
- African portraits (see page 5)
- A passion for art (see page 6)

Three Mennonite artists





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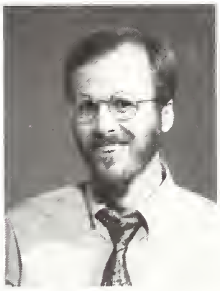
Prologue

In this issue we celebrate artists among us. We've focused on three visual artists but wish to encourage all artists or potential artists to use their creative gifts, no matter what the medium may be.

Read the work of another artist, poet Suzanne Lawrence, on page 7. A year ago Suzanne's poem "The Matchbox" won first place at the Evangelical Press Association convention and an honorable mention at the Associated Church Press meeting.

Paul Schrag and Dorothy Yoder Nyce (pages 10-11) encourage us to attend the next Mennonite World Conference meeting, to be held in Calcutta, India, in 1997. They say we have much to learn from our brothers and sisters there.

In her bimonthly column, "Learning to pray," Marlene Kropf (page 12) shows us how to make praise a natural part of our prayer.



We have an overseas gift fund that allows us to send *The Mennonite* to Mennonites overseas who want it but cannot afford it. Three subscriptions (two from India and one from Serbia) are about to expire, and we do not have enough money in our gift fund to pay for these. Anyone wishing to contribute to this fund may send a check to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Include a note or write in the memo space on the check, "For overseas gift fund." Thanks for your help. *gh*

Next issue: The year of the family

Cover: Top photo by Carla Reimer, bottom left photo by Dave Linscheid

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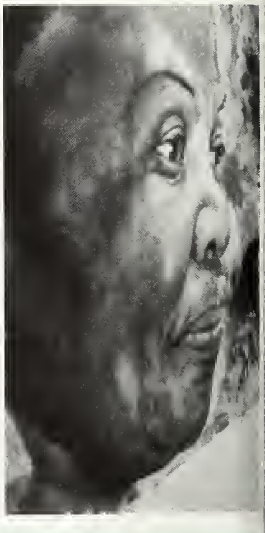

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With eyes and heart open

Seattle artist Sandy Zeiset Richardson has journeyed from studying pews as a child to showing her clay vessels and intaglio etchings in galleries around the United States.

Carla Reimer

Artist Sandy Zeiset Richardson recalls how, as a child at the Bally Mennonite Church in southeastern Pennsylvania, she studied the pews on Sunday morning.

"I guess I was a visual kid. There wasn't a whole lot to look at in church. I looked at the wood grain in the pews, the way the light came through the venetian blinds, the backs of people's heads," she says. "The only time I paid attention to the sermon was when the speaker told a story—then I was right there."

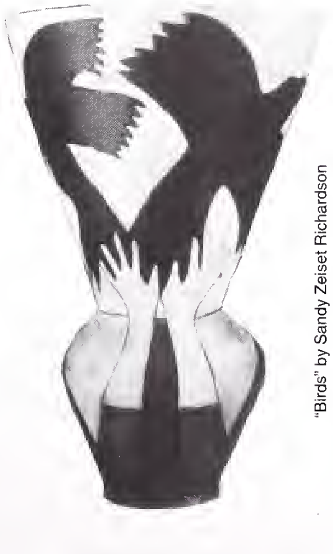
As Sandy grew up, she absorbed the Mennonite view about material items. On a Sunday school field trip to a Roman Catholic church, she remembers thinking how difficult it was to pay attention to the service because the sanctuary was filled with "all these things."

"I saw that as a negative. I didn't realize that visual communication was as valid as written or verbal communication," she says.

Today Sandy works full time as an artist in Seattle. She has her own studio space at The Salty Dog, an artists' cooperative. Artworks Gallery in downtown Seattle has shown her work for six years. She also shows work at galleries in San Francisco and Philadelphia and at the People's Place in Intercourse, Pa.

In spite of her belief that "the visual is a way we know things" about God and the world, she still struggles with the questions her career raises: "I make things. I ask myself, 'Does the world need more things?'"

Mindless consumerism: "At this point, I have come to terms with this question in this way: The world needs to have more meaning. I try to put meaning into my work," she says. "If someone connects with one of my pieces to the point where they want to live with it, that's different from mindless consumerism."



"Birds" by Sandy Zeiset Richardson

It took a number of years for Sandy to decide to pursue her interest in art. After two years at Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va., she dropped out in 1977. "I just didn't know what I wanted to do with my life."

She moved back to Pennsylvania, where she worked at an

> **_"The world needs to have more meaning. I try to put meaning into my work."_**

insurance company. When a co-worker decided to move to Colorado and joked with Sandy about coming along, she thought, "Why not?"

In August 1978, at the age of 21, Sandy packed up her belongings and headed west to Boulder, Colo. "It was an adventure," she recalls. "An early adjustment came with the realization that, not only was there not a Mennonite church every five miles, but there was no Mennonite church at all in Boulder at that time."

Sandy soon realized how much of who she was had been defined by the Mennonite community that surrounded her as she grew up. "At Eastern Mennonite College I thought I had all the answers," she says. "Boulder was good for me because it gave me a lot of questions, new experiences that didn't fit the mold.

With eyes and heart open

"It was not an easy time. I am not proud of everything I did during that time. But it is a time when my faith became my own."

Colorado was also the place where Richardson met her future husband, Stan. "We shared a love of photography, which is a medium that reconnected me with my artistic side," she says.

The next move was to Seattle. In 1981 Sandy was accepted into the art department at the University of Washington in Seattle. "My major was art education. I still couldn't leave behind the Mennonite notion of service, so I thought I'd become an art teacher," she says.

At the University of Washington, she found a medium she was comfortable with—ceramics. "I liked the fact that clay is basically earth. It's also very forgiving, up to a point."

She also felt that ceramics offered her the opportunity to explore a subject more in-depth. "It wasn't until my last quarter in school that I started working in a figurative, storytelling style that continues to evolve in my work today."

After graduation Sandy worked for two years as a substitute teacher. "I did some good art work during that time," she says. "Substitute teaching was at times so unfulfilling and demoralizing that I would rush home to my studio because I had to do something creative."

After Sandy taught for a year at a small private school, she and Stan moved to the Cascade Mountains east of Seattle. For three years they served as the directors of Camp Camrec, owned by the Washington Mennonite churches. Sandy continued her work there in a studio space at a nearby artists' community.

Money, violence, words: It was while Sandy was at the camp, now over three years ago, that she was diagnosed as having multiple sclerosis. "In the past, my work dealt with themes of money, violence, words. I often depicted the incongruities of our society, sometimes in a humorous way. Since I was diagnosed, my work has taken on a more personal, more serious tone; it's more connected to my own experience."

Carla Reimer

In January she had a show of her clay vessels and intaglio etchings at the Artworks Gallery. Sandy titled the show "The Long Year." "I started out [last] year with a lot of energy and a lot on my plate. Then in May I experienced an exacerbation of my multiple sclerosis," she says.

For a period of almost five months, Sandy could only work for short times. Her walking was also affected. "I wanted to do a lot more work, but I couldn't. It was a frightening time," she says.

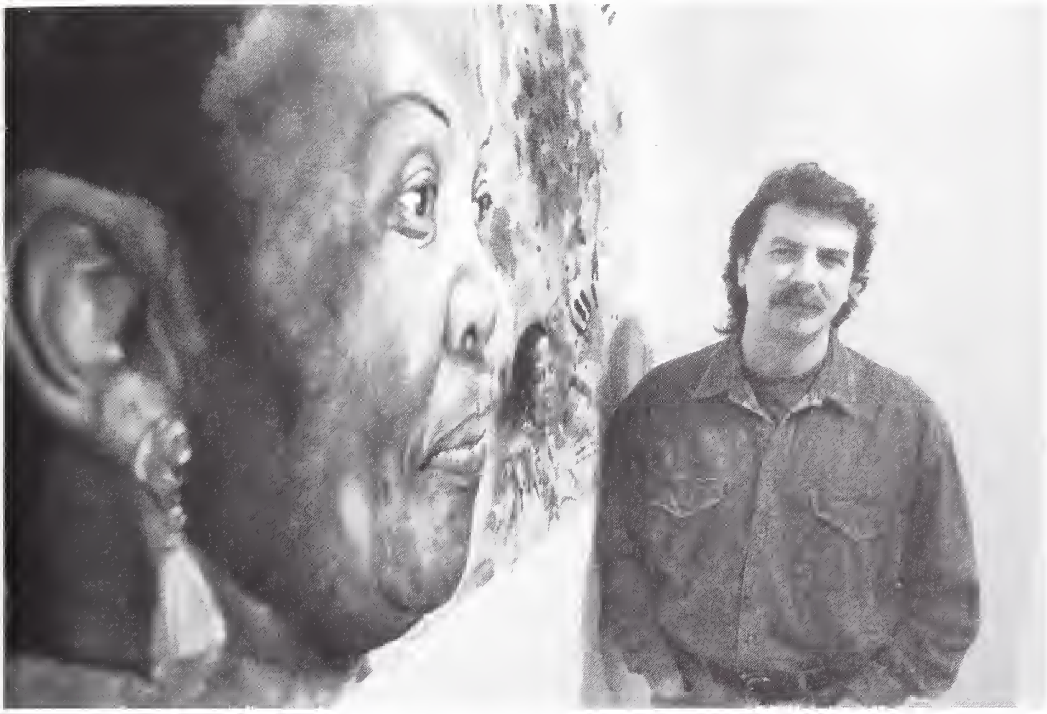
For the last several months she has been feeling better. "Now I am amazed when I find myself walking someplace with little thought or effort. For a while, it wasn't so effortless. I am more appreciative of smaller things," she says.

Still, it remains in the back of her mind that multiple sclerosis is a disease of exacerbations and remissions. "I try to maintain a healthy lifestyle and attitude. Last summer I read Frederick Buechner's *Telling Secrets*. He writes that God acts 'not as the puppeteer … but rather the great director who, no matter what role fate casts us in, conveys to us somehow from the wings, if we have our eyes, ears, hearts open … how we can play those roles in a way to enrich and ennoble and hallow the whole vast drama of things.'

> ***"In my work and my life, regardless of where they take me, I will try to keep my eyes, ears and heart open."***

"In my work and my life, regardless of where they take me, I will try to keep my eyes, ears and heart open," she says.

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.



The image of people in Africa is often dictated by the media, which tends to show them against a backdrop of famine, war and disaster.

Portraits of Africa

Winnipeg artist Ray Dirks finds acclaim in his watercolor paintings of Africans in Winnipeg.

Around 1,200 people attended a January exhibition of "The Face(s) of Africa in Winnipeg," a collection of watercolor paintings by Winnipeg artist Ray Dirks. The Jan. 7 opening, which brought more than 300, was the largest ever for Winnipeg's Main Access Gallery.

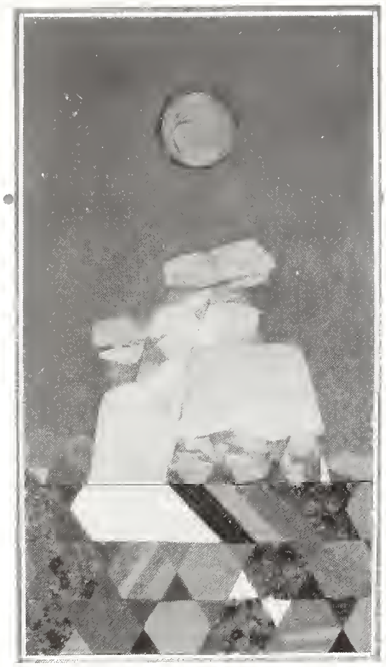
For Ray, "The Face(s) of Africa in Winnipeg" was a "natural follow-up" to his previous show, called "Africa: Art of the People." That show, which featured paintings by African artists and Ray, opened in Winnipeg in 1991 and has been traveling across Canada and in the United States ever since.

"The Face(s) of Africa in Winnipeg" features portraits of a dozen Africans who live in Winnipeg. Each portrait has a biography of the person portrayed. People who attended the opening were able to meet some of the people portrayed in the exhibition.

"After meeting Africans in Winnipeg through my previous show, this exhibition was the inevitable result," Ray says. "I wanted people to catch a glimpse of why I have fallen in love with the strength, dignity and diversity of Africans. I also wanted to show that all of these qualities aren't just found far away in Africa but right here at home as well."

Ray allowed subjects to dictate their poses, apparel and backdrop. "The idea was to give them a chance to present themselves as they wished," he says, noting that the image of people in Africa is often dictated by the media, which tends to show them against a backdrop of famine, war and disaster.

"That's not to say that famine and war can't be found in places in Africa," he adds. "But for the majority of Africans, that's not their day-to-day life."



"Three Sisters" by Erma Martin Yost

A passion for art

Erma Martin Yost overcame her own timidity and has spent her life doing art.

Beth Hege

If you say you're an artist, people raise their eyebrows as if to say, 'What do you really do?'" But art is what Erma Martin Yost really does, and it is something she has done since childhood. "I say I am an artist in the sense that art is the activity I have spent my life doing," she says. "History will judge who the artists are."

Dave Linscheid

A series of Erma's paintings are included in the book *Born Giving Birth: Creative Expressions of Mennonite Women* (Faith & Life Press, 1991).

Her more recent work is mixed media and focuses on Southwestern themes. She and her husband, Leon, have left their home in Jersey City, N.J., for the mesas and deserts of the Southwest many times over the past 15 years. "The beauty is inspiring," Erma says. "You get a sense of geologic time that is almost incomprehensible. The trivia of everyday life just isn't important."

Erma describes her career as having three phases. She began with large abstract landscape art. Now she makes smaller, mixed-media pieces. In between was the time that she combined canvas and quilting.

"I was always interested in sewing. Even in preschool I made doll clothes," she says. "I felt I had done enough landscape painting and I made some quilted jackets. My friend came over and said, 'Why don't you exhibit your jackets?' I didn't want to do that, but it gave me the idea to combine sewing and painting."

In the early 1980s, when *Born Giving Birth* was compiled, this was the work Erma was doing. The book "is a nice attempt to show that there are many ways women give birth to thoughts. We're not just baby-makers," Erma says. "I think there is a lot of work out there that could have been included."

Erma is pleased that *Born Giving Birth* includes a "life cycles" series that she did. "It's nice to see them together in one place," she says, and adds that she sold all but two of the pieces.

On the Indiana farm where Erma grew up, "making things was a way of life," she says. "I always made things. Women made quilts and braided rugs, my father and brothers were carpenters. My grandfather whittled." As a Mennonite artist, she had to overcome her own timidity more than fight for acceptance from her community, as some Mennonite artists have. "You know you have to do it when you realize it's a passion," she says.

"You know you have to do it when you realize it's a passion."

Beth Hege is a graduate student in international communications at the University of Oregon in Eugene.

In the city at twenty

Suzanne Lawrence

In the leaves of November she walks
by cold-skinned brick and stone,
and windows offering shoes,
pies, groceries, books.

In the bank she counts her quarters
through the smaller-than-hand-sized
opening to a teller
who knows her by number.

From The Long Year series by Sandy Zeiset Richardson

Up the hill she continues
to the light-green stucco,
through two glass doors,
one needs a key,

up two twists of stairs,
then down a dim hallway.
Unlocking her door, she enters,
turns and locks herself in.

She has met many men
who know what they want.
Her hopes are fragmented
by love.

In April she stays in
for three raining days.
She thinks the streets are flooded.
She does not get off the couch

when her boyfriend rings the bell,
or the restaurant calls,
or her mother calls.
One of those nights

she turns on the radio
and hears a long piece called
"Flight of the Snow Geese."
In the clearness after that rain

she gives her boyfriend the drop
and gets another job.
She has to live, of course,
through the night his friends make her come

to beg through his locked door
for an answer from his kitchen
where he has knelt and laid his head
in an apartment-sized gas oven.

Suzanne Lawrence lives near Hillsboro, Kan.

Letters

Study the Confession of Faith

I feel I must respond to Monty Ledford's letter (April 12 issue). After all, the church at Aberdeen, Idaho, is where I received nurture before going off to college and later the ministry.

I am sorry to read that neither the education committee nor the deacons were willing to read through the proposed Confession of Faith. They missed a great opportunity in understanding the Christian faith. And, yes, even non-Mennonites can have an enriching experience and perhaps even make a commitment to the Lord.

At the Rocky Ford (Colo.) Church, our involvement in this confession was just the opposite. We set aside six Sunday evenings to "read through" the draft articles. It was an exciting time. Each article we read through a paragraph at a time, and gave opportunity for questions, impressions and suggested changes. There were some interesting discussions.

Reading aloud in a group is much more enriching than reading alone. No wonder that deacon said "he read the first page and got no further."

In our case we didn't complete the reading in six evenings, and each evening was spent only in reading, and sessions were over an hour. We still have two more to go. We had 22 people attending, and the majority attended most of the sessions. No one dropped out because of disinterest. *Paul Isaak, Rocky Ford, Colo.*

Mennonites and handguns

At first I didn't believe the Mennonite Central Committee *Washington Memo* assertion that 90 people die in the United States from gunfire each day. So I checked the statistics and, sure enough, it's correct, counting murder and suicide. Handguns seem to be the firearm of choice.

I started wondering why Mennonites don't restrict dangerous firearms from their communities, for their own safety and as an example for others. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that the Second Amendment does not limit in any way state and local gun-control laws. In some towns, Mennonites are a sizable faction, and any town is free to enact whatever firearm legislation it wishes. Yet it is Morton Grove, a town near where I live, that has a handgun ban—but I don't know of any Mennonites or Brethren there.

Of course, firearm legislation might be considered an insult to the armed citizens in one's community. Many townspeople would be angry if anyone tried to take away their pistols. *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*

Disagree with book review

In response to the review of *A Guide to the New Testament World* (April 12 issue), I am delighted that Gordon Zerbe appreciates this "solid" and "excellent" presentation on the Greco-Roman world. However, the heading of the review is misleading in stating that "Jesus wasn't a Greek." The book clearly says that Jesus "was a Jew" (p. 66). Chapter 7 on "Society" adds material on Jewish living to chapter 2, right up front, on Judaism.

Apparently Zerbe is looking for a volume on the Jewish origins of earliest Christianity. That is a different subject. This book is designed to give insight into the world into which the early church was rapidly spreading. It provides information not readily accessible in a Bible dictionary, which covers Jewish aspects more thoroughly. Specialists reading any chapter of *A Guide* will want more on their areas. This book, though soundly based, is designed for the average reader.

In fairness to the author, a book should be evaluated on its stated purpose, in this case exploring "the political and social background against which [the New Testament] books were written" (p. 19). The temple and Palestinian Judaism are important but were becoming less of a factor as the church reached all kinds of people in the Roman world in that period, the second half of the first century. This book can help us see how that outreach happened and help us become more serious about the mission of the church in our own world. *S. David Garber, book editor, Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa.*

I have only recently begun receiving *The Mennonite* and I appreciate it very much.

I was saddened by your reviewer's treatment of Albert A. Bell's *A Guide to the New Testament World*. I have been reviewing books for some 40 years and I know that it is never hard to criticize an author for what he does *not* say. I think Herald Press is to be commended for having published this enlightening introduction to the New Testament.

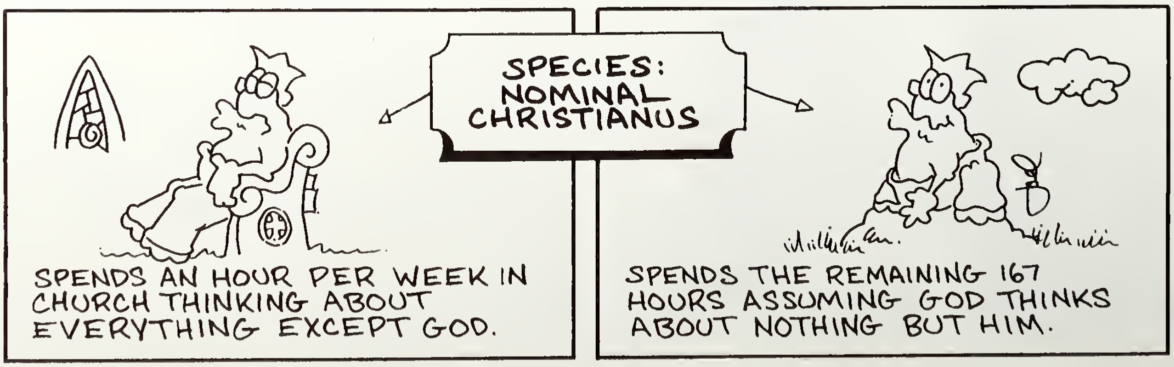
I did not find Bell's chapter on the Judaic background disappointing, since that is what the serious New Testament scholar is most likely to learn in most any New Testament study. What one *is* likely seldom to hear or read are just the kinds of information Bell so helpfully brings together.

May this rejoinder give the prospective reader some second thoughts about Bell's book before he dismisses it quickly, based upon Zerbe's review.
Gerald C. Studer, Lansdale, Pa.

Integration study unfair, dishonest

Some of us continue to be surprised by the lack of fairness and candor in the process of discussing a possible MC/GC merger.

Pontius' Puddle


SPECIES: NOMINAL CHRISTIANUS
SPENDS AN HOUR PER WEEK IN CHURCH THINKING ABOUT EVERYTHING EXCEPT GOD.
SPENDS THE REMAINING 167 HOURS ASSUMING GOD THINKS ABOUT NOTHING BUT HIM.
© Joel Kauffmann

The latest example is the response form sent to congregations by the Integration Exploration Committee. This response form appears to be a bit one-sided. It gives no opportunity for people who favor cooperation instead of integration to say so.

The five options on the form are these:

1. favor integration soon
2. favor gradual integration
3. remain undecided
4. say it does not matter
5. oppose integration.

What if an additional option had been listed on the form:

6. favor cooperation more than integration?

After all, the committee presented the discussion to the churches with two possible approaches: "Do you favor integration or do you prefer cooperation?" But the response form prevented those who favor cooperation from even registering their opinion. Wouldn't it seem churchly and fair to issue an apology along with a new response form which is more inclusive?

Not only is the biased nature of the response form surprising. The report of the tabulation of the response to date from congregations in *The Mennonite* (March 22 issue) failed to highlight that only 3.5 percent of members have responded. The reader is led to believe that the response was substantial when it was only miniscule.

Apparently the Integration Exploration Committee considered that response significant enough, however, to engage two professional sociologists to produce a 35-page report. On what other issue in the church is a less than 4 percent response to a one-sided response form considered a mandate?

Even with the biased nature of the response form and the tiny response, it is interesting to note that only 9.2 percent of respondents favor integration soon, and 44.2 percent oppose integration, remain undecided or don't much care. Yet the church press has rushed to proclaim that integration seems inevitable. Why?

Three questions: (1) What would the response from our members be to a response form that is fair and not slanted? (2) What do the other 96.5 percent of our people feel? and (3) What kind of marriage will our two denominations experience if the process itself lacks candor, integrity and fairness? *Merle Good, Lancaster, Pa.*

Vern Preheim responds: The assignment for the Integration Exploration Committee was to explore integration. The packet prepared by the committee included many different background pieces of information, including a piece stating the case for integration and the case for cooperation (pages 51-52). The response form was designed to have members reflect to the committee what they think about integration rather than to take a vote between integration and cooperation. Since the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church are now cooperating, the assumption was that checking option 5, being opposed to integration, implied wanting to stay with cooperation.

The report of the responses from members published in *The Mennonite* (March 22 issue, page 13) does indicate that the response is based on 3.5 percent of the members, representing 13 percent of the congregations. The committee was disappointed that not more congregations responded. What does it mean besides that congregations didn't feel it important enough of an issue to take the time to respond?

Page 2 of the response form invited groups studying the packet to share their concerns about integration and indicate what additional information they would need in order to make a clear choice. Many did record comments. Quite a few indicated they wished there would have been a sixth option.

I can only assume that the 3.5 percent of the members accurately reflected the 13 percent of the congregations they represented. I, too, wonder what the other 87 percent of the congregations think. They will have an opportunity, if they choose, to respond to a draft of a resolution on integration that will be mailed to General Conference congregations about mid-May. *Vern Preheim, General Secretary, General Conference Mennonite Church*

Don't cut peace and justice

I am extremely saddened that Robert Hull's position as peace and justice secretary was cut by the Commission on Home Ministries (April 12 issue, page 14). What is the core of who Mennonites are? What makes us unique? Why are we Mennonites and not Methodists or Baptists? As my girls were growing up I explained that baptism as adults and our peace position were the two beliefs that distinguished us from other Protestants. What do I tell them now? Cutting the peace position gives us all a message that pacifism is not important anymore. We have already watered down so much of what has historically defined us.

I get the feeling that we have to "get on the bandwagon of evangelism." What better way is there to evangelize the world than to show that in an era of violence, peace might just be the best alternative? It seems to me that is the message the world needs most right now. I am worried about the direction the General Conference Mennonite Church is headed. *Leann Toews, Goessel, Kan.*

Work with feelings

Anyone reading the letter dealing with child abuse (April 12 issue, page 9) should be able to feel the pain that is being expressed. But it is a long way from understanding to agreeing with the position taken by the writer of that letter.

Anyone who has worked as a counselor in the last few years knows of the pain that child abuse has caused children and that this pain is just now coming up for many. Whether a person is 15, 30 or even 60, if the repressed memories of child abuse are just now coming up, the feelings must be dealt with. Even if the parents never viewed the discipline as "abuse," when the child "remembers" the discipline as abuse the child must then decide the effect of what happened to him or her as a child.

Now if the only concept the parent understands is, "you have to forgive the way you were disciplined," and the child believes he or she was abused, you have the makings for conflict. A child who believes he or she was abused must work with that abuse (or what feels like abuse). If forgiveness can come out of that work, so be it. One cannot forgive what one is not allowed to understand.

A feeling cannot be willed to another person, especially through manipulation. *Jim Compton-Schmidt, Fresno, Calif.*

Send letters to: *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Speaking out

Mennonites should go to India in 1997

Why go? To learn.

Paul Schrag

Every Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregation in North America should send at least one person to Mennonite World Conference Assembly 13 in Calcutta, India, in January 1997. That idea was suggested at the MWC General Council meeting in Zimbabwe last July, and it is a good one.

MWC administrative services director Kathy Good estimates it will cost $3,500 to $4,000 (U.S.) for a North American to attend the assembly. This includes airfare, staying in a modest hotel, meals, registration and some additional travel in India. Additional travel is included because visits to Mennonite churches in other parts of India are expected to be an integral part of the assembly.

If a congregation decides to cover someone's cost of attending, there is plenty of time to raise the money in the next 2 1/2 years. Since fewer North Americans will be able to go to Calcutta than went to Winnipeg four years ago, congregational representatives are needed to link our members with this important event.

Contributions toward assembly attendance should not focus only on getting North Americans to India. MWC executive director Larry Miller encourages congregations to support the MWC travel fund, which enables members from less wealthy countries to take part in the assembly. Congregations could set a goal to raise equal amounts for their own assembly representatives and for the travel fund.

North Americans and Europeans should make the extra effort to go to India because at this assembly Mennonites in the developing world will be missionaries to us. Rather than having an assembly dominated by Westerners, where Mennonites from the rest of the world see how we do a church festival, it is our turn to learn from their traditions and expressions of faith.

Mennonites from many countries will have a good assembly even if few Westerners take part. It will be mostly our loss if we're not there.

Cross-cultural fellowship: Rather than dwelling on the difficulty and expense of visiting India, we should anticipate the excitement and adventure of new experiences and the inspiration we'll give and receive through cross-cultural fellowship.

North Americans have gotten used to giving to overseas causes over the years, and this is good. But now we must learn to be receivers, too, if Mennonites around the world are to develop into an interdependent group of equals. Assembly 13 is a step toward that ideal, said film and video producer Michael Hostetler of Scottdale, Pa., who first suggested the goal of each North American congregation sending someone to India.

Rather than having an assembly dominated by Westerners, where Mennonites from the rest of the world see how we do a church festival, it is our turn to learn from their traditions and expressions of faith.

"The church in other parts of the world is growing into new maturity," he said. "[We] North Americans need to change our understanding of what the church is and how we relate to the international church. We often think we are the ones with something to give. But it also goes the other way, and the time has come to give and receive."

And the time has come to start thinking about Assembly 13 and praying for those who are preparing for Calcutta '97. Ravi Sankara Rao of India hopes it will be a Mennonite Pentecost for the 21st century. Let's help make it happen.

Paul Schrag is managing editor of Mennonite Weekly Review.

Jesus is our example

How to go? As learners.

Dorothy Yoder Nyce

Only Luke's Gospel (2:41-47) tells about the boyhood of Jesus. But the incident reflects Jesus' readiness to be a learner among those more informed about Jewish tradition. Even though blessed with divine insight, he modeled in this instance the freedom to enter exchange without contradicting the culturally accepted leaders. As a 12-year-old, he chose not to be premature with critique. Later occasions would warrant that, without apology.

In God's Image is a fine Christian, Asian women's journal. The Summer 1993 issue includes a letter of criticism from a U.S. evangelical journal editor, faulting how a previous issue had interpreted several biblical texts. That troubled me. Did the U.S. writer need first to hear more from and experience in person the Asian writers' reality before posing as the knowledgeable Western critic?

Some Western Mennonites will likely attend the 1997 Mennonite World Conference, scheduled for Calcutta, India. I hope they experience India's religious plurality as learners—free to ask questions, free to promote understanding about truth rather than first judging or imposing their worldview.

My experience of India began 30 years ago. I have observed and absorbed more with each return. Opportunity to learn from many Indians wh

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Mennonite*.

have come to the United States during the intervening decades has also been enriching. Last year I served another semester as a volunteer at Kodaikanal International School in South India. Six weeks of travel in the country included a few days again in Calcutta. I tried to imagine an influx of Western Mennonites there.

Luke 2:41-47 reports the Jewish context of Passover, which celebrates Israel's deliverance from death in Egypt. Jewish males were required to attend; women could. At 13 a son assumed adult duties; his father was expected to acquaint him with tasks and rules during the year before that. Pious parents of young Jesus, his mother and legal father had journeyed with the caravan of relatives and friends to Jerusalem.

Following the seven-day event, the return pilgrimage began. Women and younger children went ahead of men, with plans to meet at an assigned place. Each parent could have presumed that Jesus was with the other. Toward nightfall, after 20 to 25 miles, Mary and Joseph looked for their son among the camped group. He was not found. So they returned to the city, where, on the third day, they searched further for him. Amazed by his religious interest, they found him with the temple teachers.

The temple high court did not conduct hearings during feasts or on the Sabbath. But members sat within the temple area or a nearby synagogue informally to receive questions or to restate traditions. Those interested surrounded a group of teachers or went from one rabbi to another. Jesus sat at the feet of the seated teachers as a learner. He listened to the exchange. Not preaching to his elders, he asked questions and heard the debate plus probing, counter questions.

RNS

Religious insight: And the teachers were astonished by his wisdom, his intelligent responses, his grasp of the law. Although not trained by rabbis, he interpreted Scripture. Through God-given wisdom he knew truth. Religious insight is inherent within every created child. Jesus wished to grow in the context of religious learning. He gently told his parents that, when Mary inquired. Yet, being thoroughly Jewish, he continued to obey them. Unique qualities within a child destined for a great religious future are paralleled in other faith traditions—for example, Osiris, Buddha and Mira Bai. So people detected Jesus' wisdom.

Likewise, I detected BoRam in my religious education class at Kodaikanal last spring. He was in grade 11, bright, reticent in class, almost bashful. But he was skilled with language and competent as a writer, and his knowledge surprised me. I wonder if the rabbis saw Jesus like I saw BoRam.

Visitors to India will encounter people's expressions of the religious among temples and mosques, "saddhus" (holy men) on pilgrimage, Islamic public calls to prayer or holy days shared by diverse faiths. To respect ground or objects or times of the day as sacred for another is appropriate. The faith of people is revealed on forehead marks or by clothing worn as well as in family names. Hundreds may march together for a festival, or the lone woman may be rapt in "puja" (worship). Will Mennonites be free to learn first, as Jesus did with Jewish rabbis?

Hindu goddess: The religious can also invade a shopping trip. I recall one emporium in Delhi. Next to each other inside the door were large items for three major faiths: a contemplative, rotund, metal Buddha figure; a cast-iron Hindu goddess with multiple arms to suggest ample support for a worshiper, an inlaid wood scene of the Christian Lord's Supper. I paused, remembering that Hindus use the title "Lord" also, for Krishna.

Comparison among religions is common. Written texts are part of this. So are issues of theology. Both Hinduism and Christianity know salvation through God's grace—the one with and the other without the historical Jesus. As Jesus learned from the rabbis, so early Buddhist stories show his disciples circled together with him. Whereas one person may conclude that all faiths are hopeless because they fail to achieve human solidarity, another inspires hope through sharing meager resources. Calcutta's destitute streets have been characterized as pockets of profound joy and love. Mennonites can learn from these people.

Controversy between religions has erupted through history. Any who visit Calcutta will be wise to know about linkages between the Muslim Shah Bano, the novel *The Satanic Verses* and the recent Ayodhya incident and aftermath. Then, lest descendants of Anabaptist martyrs feel excused, they may ponder the heritage of the Christian crusades that also killed Muslims.

To grow in religious tolerance is a worthy outcome for the 1997 meeting.

Calcutta's destitute streets have been characterized as pockets of profound joy and love. Mennonites can learn from these people.

Quotes from two Indians may help those from the West prepare for the encounter: "… in the core of every religion, there is something that belongs to it alone … no religion is justified in claiming that it alone is decisive for all" (S.J. Samartha). "The religious genius of India must form the background of Indian Christianity, just as the religious past and heritage of Israel, from Abraham to John the Baptizer, formed the precondition of Christ" (V. Chakkarai). To follow the pattern of Jesus, a gracious learner will shape results.

Dorothy Yoder Nyce is a writer, an adjunct Bible teacher at Goshen (Ind.) College, and is pursuing interreligious study.

Learning to pray

The spacious territory of praise

How to make praise a natural part of our prayer

Marlene Kropf

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

In my family of origin, praise was a commodity in scarce supply. It's not that my parents weren't pleased with their offspring. They simply belonged to a generation who believed that praising children would spoil them. Not long ago, my 72-year-old mother told me, "We were often proud as punch of you children." Mom and Dad didn't tell us, though; they withheld their praise because they were training us to be humble people who were centered on others, not on ourselves.

While there is no doubt wisdom in parents' attempts to curb their children's self-centeredness, the scarcity of praise in people's lives can also affect their relationship with God. We may easily come to God with our requests, but we are much less comfortable adoring God in our prayers.

We may easily come to God with our requests, but we are much less comfortable adoring God in our prayers.

It's not just conscientious parents who are to blame. Our technological culture values efficiency and productivity. Taking time to praise God seems wasteful or irrelevant when we could be doing something more useful. Even intercessory prayers seem more productive than prayers of praise.

Another obstacle to praise of God may be our fear of glibness and insincerity. After all, we are bombarded with flattery and false praise every time we pick up a magazine or turn on the television. The world of advertising thrives on extravagant praise. Thomas Merton once said, "Since everything is praised with the hollow enthusiasm of a radio announcer, it turns out in the end that *nothing* is praised."

So how do God's people respond to the frequent invitation of Scripture to praise God with our whole hearts? How does praise become a comfortable and natural part of our prayer?

RNS

Perhaps the first step is to acknowledge that God is worthy of our praise and desires our praise. But equally compelling is the realization that we *need* to praise God. Augustine said in the beginning of his *Confessions*:

"You move us to delight in praising you, for you have formed us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in you."

We cannot be healthy people without a life of praise. We cannot know who we are, nor can we find our way in the universe until we discover who God is and respond to God's gracious invitation to become friends. In our prayers of thanksgiving and adoration, we acknowledge God's sovereignty and friendship. We find our place as beloved children.

In the human realm we know that relationships expand and deepen when people express their love and devotion to each other. The same dynamic is at work in our relationship with God. To grow closer to God, we must give voice to our longing for God and speak our love and desire.

If we are tongue-tied, we can borrow the language of the Psalms to speak our praise. Psalms 30, 66, 84 or 103 will open our mouths to declare God's goodness. Singing a hymn of praise even in the privacy of our personal prayer can be liberating. Songs such as "Praise, I will praise you, Lord" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book*, 76) or "Christ, we do all adore thee" (*HWB*, 105) will release the flow of love toward God.

The face of God: We can also adopt the discipline of focusing on God's presence each time we come to prayer. Instead of jumping swiftly into a stream of words, we can wait in silence and ask ourselves, "What is the face of God I have seen today? How has God been made known to me?" As we become aware of the gift of God's presence, we can open our hearts to express joy and gratitude to the One who is our friend and Lord.

Without praise we shrink. Without praise we become pale, emaciated shadows of the people we were created to be. Psalm 66:8-12 suggests that the people who bless God are "brought out to a spacious place," a wide and unencumbered territory, a place of freedom and grace. Praise is not only a requirement for robust spiritual health; it is also the means of our transformation. When we enter the spacious place of God's presence, we begin to see the world as God sees it. We come to trust in God's good purposes, and our lives reflect God's own gracious character. We become God's people in the world.

"Make a joyful noise to God all the earth; sing the glory of God's name; give to God glorious praise" (Psalm 66:1).

MCC contact

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Images *of hope or hopelessness*

Images

of hope or hopelessness?

A poll suggested that while relief agency reports about terrible situations in the developing world are important steps to awareness,

"after years of exposure to heart-wrenching messages, and no apparent success in alleviating any of these problems, people lose hope, and then interest."

When many people think of the developing world, they see images of famine, disaster and despair.

A 1990 poll of Canadian attitudes towards international development found a pervading sense of hopelessness about whether conditions in the developing world would ever improve. The poll suggested that a major reason why people feel hopeless is because of the negative images of the world's poorer countries.

Where do these negative images come from? Many blame the media, which tends only to report about the developing world when disaster strikes. It seems that the only time the world's poorer countries make the news is when something terrible happens. This can lead people to think that nothing positive ever happens in these countries.

But the media is not the only culprit—relief agencies are also to blame.

The poll suggested that while relief agency reports about terrible situations in the developing world are important steps in creating awareness, "after years of exposure to heart-wrenching messages, and no apparent success in alleviating any of these problems, people lose hope, and then interest."

The poll's findings are supported by a 1991 study sponsored by the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC), an umbrella group for Canadian relief and development agencies.

That study concluded that use of so-called "famine pornography" may bring in lots of money, but in the long term it produces a sense of despair that anything can be done to help people in poorer countries.

The study suggests that years of exposure to images of famines, disasters and starving children can cause the opposite of what relief groups intend— instead of becoming informed, enthusiastic supporters of overseas development, people may question if there is any point in giving money to support relief and development work overseas at all.

At the same time, the use of negative images creates the false impression that people in the world's poorer countries are pathetic victims incapable of helping themselves. In the effort to show what North Americans can do to help, the fund appeals sometimes make the world's poorer citizens look like passive bystanders, completely dependent on outside help.

A steady diet of these images can lead to the erroneous notion that people in the developing world are completely incapable of helping themselves, and lead to a deep-seated paternalism.

The reality is quite different.

As MCC workers around the world have discovered, North Americans do not possess all the solutions to the problems of the developing world. We can help, especially during times of famine or natural disaster, but it is the citizens of the world's poorer countries who will have to solve their own problems—something they are capable of doing.

For every tragic story, there are many other stories of ordinary people who successfully overcome enormous hardships. During the Ethiopian famine of 1984-85, millions of people were fed by outside food aid, but millions received no food aid at all and managed to survive. Stories of how people in poor countries help themselves also must be told.

Unfortunately, agencies that focus on telling success stories discover that it is very hard to raise funds. It's much easier to raise money by showing a starving child than to show happy children and ask for funds to keep them that way. One agency cancelled filming in Ethiopia when unexpected rains turned the fields green—pictures of dry, barren fields raise more money.

The CCIC study concluded that organizations that "moved away from child sponsorships and 'pornography of poverty' have seen their donations stagnate or atrophy."

How can famine pornography be halted?

The CCIC study recommended that relief and development groups abide by a code of advertising ethics. MCC created such a code for itself in 1993 (see page 4). The CCIC suggested that donors only support groups that have adopted such codes; groups that persisted in using the old ways of raising money would be forced to stop by curtailed donations.

Pressure from North American donors will have an effect. But the most credible pressure for change will come from the developing world itself. Citizens of the world's poorer nations are becoming more aware of how they are portrayed to raise funds, and are beginning to press for changes.

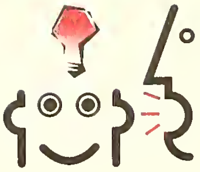
Since much of the money raised for overseas aid is not used for emergency situations, but for ongoing development programs, partner organizations overseas may one day refuse to accept money for non-emergency activities from agencies that use negative images to raise funds. Public knowledge of such refusals would surely have a detrimental effect on the fund-raising ability of agencies.

There are times when North Americans should not be shielded from the horror of mass starvation or natural disaster.

There are times when we should be moved to give by the graphic images of suffering. But reports about crisis and emergency in the developing world should be balanced by the many stories of hope.

When it comes to images of the developing world, the Golden Rule applies—do unto others as you would like others to do unto you. In other words, people in the developing world should be shown the way we would like to be portrayed—as people who, although they may need occasional assistance, possess self-worth, dignity and the strength of character and community to help themselves.

••• John Longhurst
MCC Canada
Communications



Communicating with integrity

Concern about the way people who are poor, including MCC's partners, are portrayed in the public media—and how MCC should portray them—has sparked invigorating discussions around board tables and in the lunch rooms of MCC headquarters over the years.

The debate most often circles around two questions: Do our partners have needs or do they have wisdom and strength? And following that, do we report on their needs or their strengths?

The answer to the first question is simple: MCC partners have needs and they are strong.

The second question challenges all of us. We cannot report everything about every partner, every worker, in every project, every country. The human brain could not absorb the volume.

So we report selectively.

It is tempting to be guided solely by the standard definition of news and report that which is "new" or out-of-the-ordinary—the tragedies that occur—the floods, hurricanes, famines, wars. This standard definition of news works "at home." We read about murders in the Winnipeg Free Press but because we live here we know that most people in Winnipeg are not murderers but decent people as we assume ourselves to be.

For MCC, reporting "as usual" does not work because we are usually reporting about places and people our readers do not know.

"Whenever Africa makes it into our media, the stories are of drought, mass starvation, bloody conflict, massacres, tragedy," notes Eric Olfert, MCC secretary for Africa. "Africa does have its share of war, bloody conflict and drought; Africa is also a place of faith, community and hospitality."

For MCC workers communicating with integrity means sharing the good news of God and God's people at work —in ordinary and extraordinary times. We need to report on the good as well as the bad. We need to report about the churches in Zambia, for instance, that in 1992 shared food with the entire community at great sacrifice in the midst of the drought of the century.

Communicating with integrity also means talking about hunger, wars and injustice.

So why do we at MCC sometimes hesitate to talk about this underbelly of the world?

For a variety of reasons. We want to balance the negative stories in the North American media. More importantly we want our North American friends to learn to love, appreciate, even learn from these new friends we have learned to love. Talking only about those who are hungry ignores the fact that others are feeding themselves. Talking about the evils of governments may jeopardize partners living in those countries.

Yet to report only information that counterbalances what others are reading and hearing makes us appear unbalanced, sometimes naive.

To report only the good—when there is evil and injustice, poverty, suffering, death—is also inaccurate. It puts us in the business of "sunshine reporting" or the "journalism of joy." Worse yet, we could be charged with covering up the hunger, corruption and evil that plague sisters and brothers.

As an MCC worker wrote in late 1993, "The reality is that Zairians are going through a very dark time. However I don't see this in the resources that are coming out of MCC. The constituency is getting a steady diet of upbeat reports of hope in Africa."

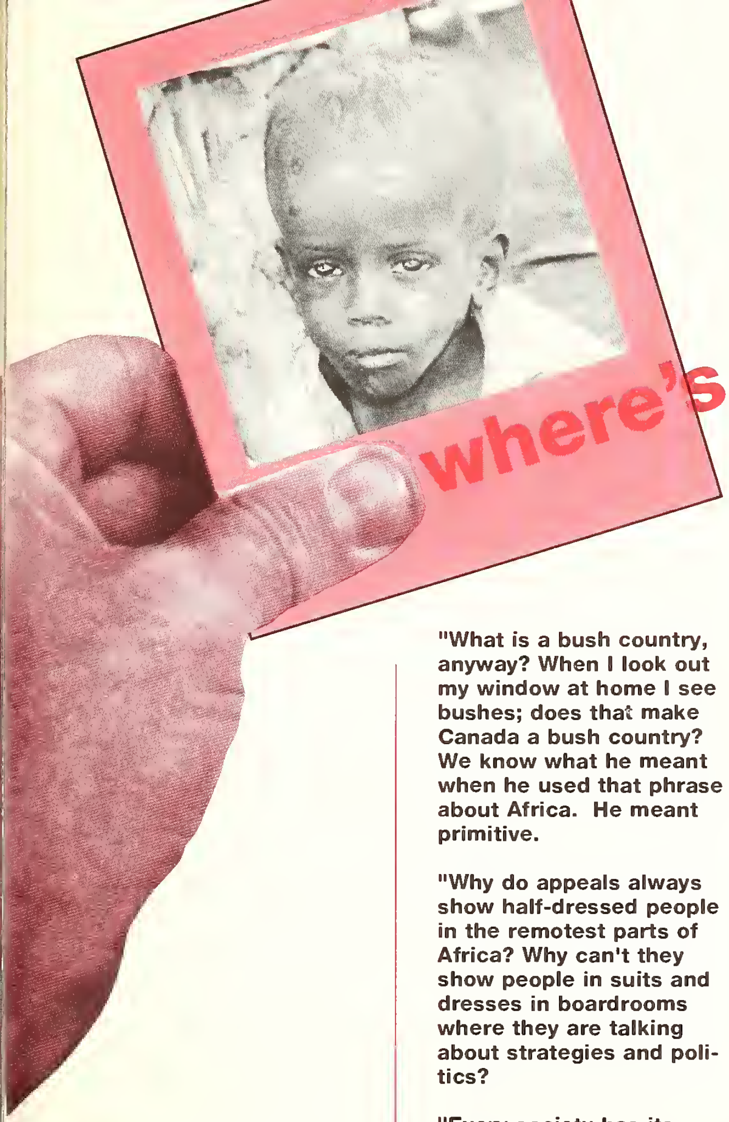
We are not interested in covering up the world's evil or pain; neither are we interested in communicating a steady diet of pathos. That image of the world lacks integrity. Neither is it a sustainable way to build community.

In this spirit, we prepared a code of conduct to guide us as we aim to communicate with integrity about the world as seen through our own and our partners' eyes. The code's highlights follow.

1. MCC will seek to provide a balanced view that honestly reports about needs, but that also tells stories of strength and hope about the people in the world's poorer countries and poor people in North America.
2. MCC will promote an awareness of the fundamental reasons for poverty and hunger around the world.
3. MCC will report about partners and other people we work with in a way that affirms their dignity, self-worth and resourcefulness.
4. MCC will avoid the use of a steady diet of images of need to raise funds for or awareness about relief efforts.
5. MCC will report in such a way that it enables North American Christians to more fully see themselves as members of God's global community.

For a complete copy of the code of conduct, please contact the Communications Department in Akron, Pa., or Winnipeg, Man.

••• **Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker**
MCC Communications



where's the humanity?!

We've all seen the pictures of emaciated children dressed in rags, resting in the dust, numb expressions a testament to the horror of their lives.

Sometimes the pictures are used to illustrate stories telling us about the hopelessness of life in some African country with its incompetent political leaders, moribund economy, endemic illnesses and struggling people.

Hlezipi Sy, who moved to Canada from Zimbabwe five years ago and is currently an employment counsellor in Winnipeg, fumes when she sees these images used to raise money for overseas aid projects.

"They make me angry. I saw one last week where a North American asked people to save a little boy in a 'bush country'.

"What is a bush country, anyway? When I look out my window at home I see bushes; does that make Canada a bush country? We know what he meant when he used that phrase about Africa. He meant primitive.

"Why do appeals always show half-dressed people in the remotest parts of Africa? Why can't they show people in suits and dresses in boardrooms where they are talking about strategies and politics?

"Every society has its weaknesses it wants to change. Fund appeals often only focus on those negative things about our countries."

Ahmed Geddi Mohamud, a Somali who moved to Canada two years ago, agrees. He lives in Kitchener, Ont., and is a board member of Somali-Canada Association. When the world took notice of the situation in Somalia almost two years ago, fund appeals showed the worst aspects of the country in order to raise money.

Fighting between Somali warlords in and around the Somali capital of Mogadishu and the food shortages that followed dominated the news coverage.

"They (the fund appeals) did not show the parts of the country where things were working well.

"The media gives us a fragmented view of the world. It's hard for people to put all the pieces of the puzzle together," says Rene Rojas, who moved to Canada from Bolivia 10 years ago and assists with the Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) Global Family program in Canada.

"The media gives the impression that what happens in one part of the country is true for all of the country—everyone gets lumped together. Canadians and Americans know how different the various parts of their countries are from one another—the same is true for other countries."

Dr. Yusufu Turaki, the general secretary of the Evangelical Churches of West Africa, is currently in the United States on a sabbatical leave. He says he is struck by how difficult it is to get information about the rest of the world.

"When I come here (the United States) I feel I am in a cage.

"If I want the world, I have to go elsewhere (to get information)." He says he tunes into the British Broadcasting Corporation, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation or Cuban or Moscow radio stations.

"Human rights issues, natural disasters and revolutions get in the news," said a Central American participant at a recent media seminar held in Connecticut. Where are the stories about the things that often do work in his country, like the family relationships, the local communities and the church?

Eric Olfert, MCC Africa co-secretary, expresses similar concerns about the media and fund appeals and believes the fundamental problem is one of people failing to see one another first as fellow human beings.

"We need to move beyond a fundraising mentality," says Olfert. "If we can see each other as fellow citizens of the same world, if we learn to laugh and cry together, if we can learn to respect and appreciate each other, then fundraising will no longer be an issue.

"Visiting each other, telling each other our stories, sharing our music, our art and our hospitality by going to live with each other, are ways to work at this."

Although such cultural exchanges are useful, they don't always work, Olfert says. Some North Americans go to other countries and only see the obvious problems and differences. They fail to connect at the personal level where similarities exist.

A number of groups, like the Canadian Council on International Co-operation (CCIC) and MCC, are working at ways to raise cross-cultural relationships to healthier levels, he says.

••• Rick Fast
MCC Communications

When we see a photograph, we believe we are seeing reality.

Looking at pictures

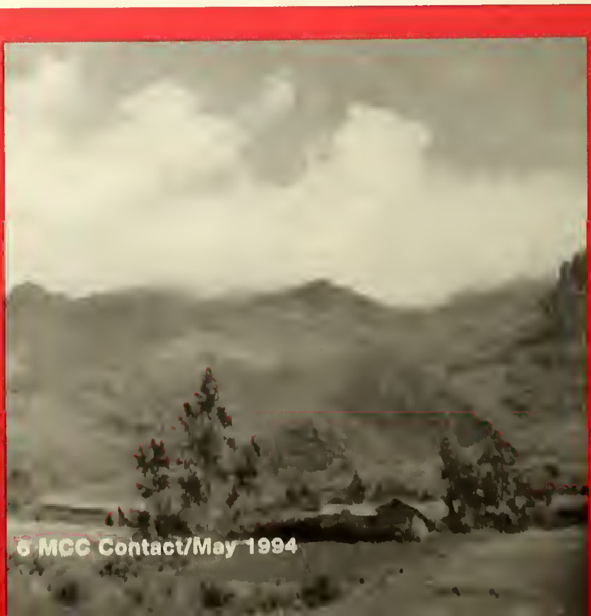
There's an old adage that "pictures don't lie." But what kind of truth are they telling?

When we see a photograph, we believe we are seeing reality. And we are—but what kind of reality is it? Who shaped that reality? Why did they shape it in a certain way and not another? These are some of the questions we need to ask when we view photographs of the developing world.

Every photograph you see in a publication will show you a reality, but all photographs are incomplete. They represent a limitation resulting from having undergone a series of selections. First, the photographer chooses the location or situation to photograph—a Nairobi slum or a middle-class home in Cairo.

After the photographs are developed, an editor decides which ones to use. Selection depends on things like exposure, focus and composition, as well as the main point the editor is trying to make. After a photograph is selected, the editor may decided to "crop" the picture—that is, select only portions of it for publication. Often this is done just to remove extraneous material or to strengthen the central subject of the photograph (a person's face, for example), but what is left in and what is taken out can also depend on the main point the editor is trying to get across.

The destruction of the tropical rainforest is a serious ecological problem, threatening the air quality all over the globe.



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Finally, a caption needs to be selected to accompany the photograph. Some captions are lengthy, in order for the photo to make sense to the viewer. Other times they can be a single word. Whatever the case, the reader is dependent on the honesty of the editor. We can either see a helpless beggar or an ordinary individual, depending on the caption.

Consistent photographic messages can, over a period of time, shape our thinking about reality. Photographs that only show Africans in need of help, for example, can make us believe that there is no other kind of person in Africa—a false assumption, to be sure.

The photographs included on these pages illustrate this selection process. Each photograph intends to show some "truth." But what truth are they telling? The caption of a photograph provides a grounding or framework that interprets the image. Different frameworks alter our understanding of each photograph, by emphasizing different aspects of the problem of destruction of the rainforest.

••• **Bruce Hildebrand**
MCC Canada Communications

Resources

•••

***Partners in India*, a 15-minute video produced by MCC, relates stories of three MCC partner groups in India: a sports club that works on village-improvement projects such as schools and irrigation; an agency that helps low-caste villagers in south India identify and overcome obstacles on their own; and a Calcutta women's group that offers support to exploited women facing such problems as spouse abuse.**

•••

***MCC feeds hungry people*, a 38-minute video, looks at how MCC provides food and addresses the causes of hunger. Part 1 briefly introduces MCC programs that help to alleviate hunger. Part 2 features people telling of their participation in projects such as Houses against Hunger, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, an MCC relief sale, a fast to raise awareness about hunger, a CROP Walk and the Global Family program.**

•••

***Ashirwad: Blessings in India*, a 7-minute VHS video produced by MCC in 1993, tells the story of women from Hindu, Muslim and Christian families in Calcutta, India, who have improved their lives despite many obstacles. Their craft group is called Ashirwad which means "blessings" in the Hindi language. The ornaments, mobiles, wall hangings and kites they make are sold through alternative trading organizations including SELF-HELP Crafts of the World.**

•••

***Syria's church: A living community*, a 12-minute, MCC-produced video, shows how Syrian Christians strive to be a living community through their Easter celebration, youth activities and desire to live peacefully with Muslim neighbors and Christians from other countries.**

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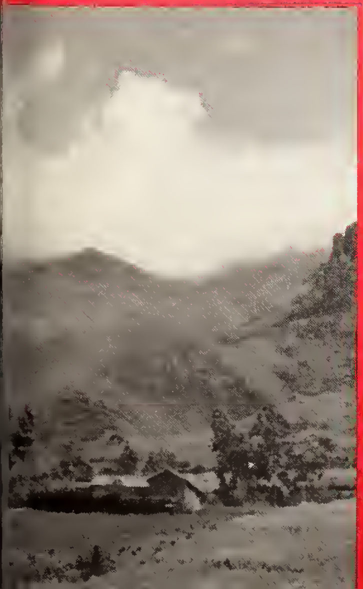
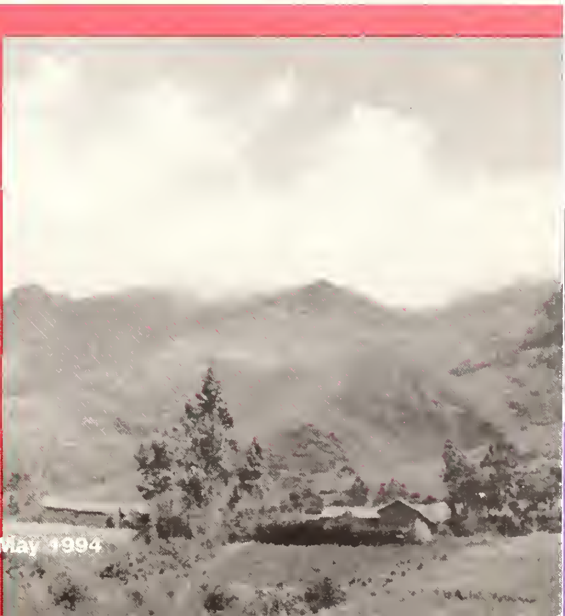


The destruction of the tropical rainforest is a serious ecological problem. Every year this farmer clears about 3 acres of rainforest, plants rice beans and corn on it for his family.

The destruction of the rainforest is a serious ecological problem. Shown here is a large tract of land belonging to a Mennonite colony in Bolivia. This land was cleared by bulldozers and heavy machinery.



Who among us hasn't said to someone, "Well, the media got it wrong again" or "They're sensationalizing things" or "They're only doing that to sell more newspapers." It is a common, habitual response. It is also often unfair.

"They are only doing that to sell more newspapers!"

When I was a newspaper editor I lost count of the number of times people came up to me to discuss stories run weeks or months before, often complaining the reporting was inaccurate or the story incomplete.

"Why didn't you call back then?" I asked. Their replies varied. Some said they hadn't thought it important enough to do so. Others simply didn't know how to go about contacting someone in the media, some were afraid to do so; they didn't want to go on record and be quoted.

Stories about foreign countries and cultures are no different. Recurring complaints are that such reports perpetuate stereotypes, are superficial, out of context and unnecessarily negative. Why aren't the good things reported?

The truth is, news editors—those people who decide which stories appear in print or on television—don't think there's much of an audience for these stories. Disgruntled readers and viewers must convince them they are wrong and that more people would buy the newspaper or listen to the newscast if it balanced the good with the bad.

In newsrooms I worked, when things were reported incorrectly or incompletely we expected someone to tell us. Factual errors were generally corrected promptly. There were slip-ups of course but the tone in the newsroom was never, "Let's cover this up so we won't look bad." Serious journalists, and the people who watch the money, are keenly aware that people stop reading, or watching, the news if the information is consistently wrong. The desire, then, is to get things right.

Feedback at newspapers I worked at usually arrived in two forms—the telephone or a letter. More direct ways have been used. One afternoon a few years ago, I received a call from an anxious receptionist telling me that the local high school football team was crowding into the lobby. They were demanding (politely) to talk to someone about an unflattering story we'd published about their coach the day before. The team had been losing badly the past month or so and the coach had suddenly decided to pull them out of the league. He claimed the other schools were stacking their teams with overaged, over-sized players and he was going to protect his boys from physical abuse.

One of our sports writers interviewed other coaches in the league and they essentially said our hometown coach pulled the team because he was a sore loser. That, along with our coach's claims, was the gist of the story we printed on the front page.

The team was upset with the information in the story and wanted to "shoot the messenger." But I admired the spirit of the response and respected their opinion. Too often people simply criticize the news media but are not prepared to speak to them directly.

What can you do if you think the media got it wrong? Write a letter. Telephone the reporter or editor—the producer if it's television or radio. Don't be belligerent or threatening, but be persistent. Know what points you want to make. Know what you want from the person you're talking to. Are you blowing off steam? Are you providing more information and expect another story soon? Is it simply information that could be used in a future article? Was there a factual error that should be corrected quickly?

Many complaints flow from the perceived tone of an article. There may not be a factual error but the complaint is that the article seems to put something in a bad light. These complaints usually come from those most closely involved with the story and therefore more sensitive. Because one person's "bad" article is often another's "good" article, these complaints are more difficult to resolve amicably.

After a provincial election in Manitoba a few years ago, our newspaper received letters from two competing candidates—the winner and the loser—accusing the paper of favoring the other. I printed the letters side by side on our editorial page and congratulated the reporters on their fair coverage and a job well done.

When the media gets it right, don't call them up to thank them for a "positive" story. Instead, thank them for doing a good, fair or complete job.

What did we do with the football team in the front office? I asked the players to appoint two spokesmen and met them in my office to discuss their concerns. The rest of them waited outside. One could argue that the players were trying to bully us but they were so courteous, we never felt threatened. In the end we wrote another story about their response and unwavering loyalty to the coach. The media generally doesn't like to be the news, but this team's action was an irresistible story.

••• **Rick Fast**
MCC Communications

How to be a sensitive cross-cultural photographer

Overseas travel and cameras—the two are synonymous. In North America, cameras and picture taking are a normal part of life. But in developing nations, cameras indicate that you are wealthy and they give you power to interpret the lives of others.

In the hands of a sensitive photographer, a camera can enhance relationships and provide a meaningful glimpse of the life in another culture. Used improperly, it can erect barriers, create hard feelings and give negative impressions of another country.

How can you be a sensitive cross-cultural photographer?

Take your time.

If you plan to spend several days or more in a community, wait a while before you begin taking pictures. It's always easier when friends take pictures of friends.

Ask permission.

Do you like someone taking your picture when you aren't prepared? Wouldn't you like to comb your hair or change your shirt? People in other countries feel the same way. In fact, people in some cultures will refuse to have their picture taken unless they can put on their best clothes. Taking a picture when they aren't prepared can be very offensive. As well, older people in many cultures are treated with deference at all times—it would be disrespectful to take a picture without seeking permission. Additionally, in some cultures there are places and things that should not be photographed. Before making a mistake, ask permission. It will usually be granted, with a few helpful guidelines.

Don't pose your subjects

When we try to pose people we can create an unnatural event which can cause discomfort. Show interest in what people are doing and then photograph them doing that activity. You'll get a more interesting picture and everyone will feel a lot better.

Don't allow yourself to only be drawn to the unusual.

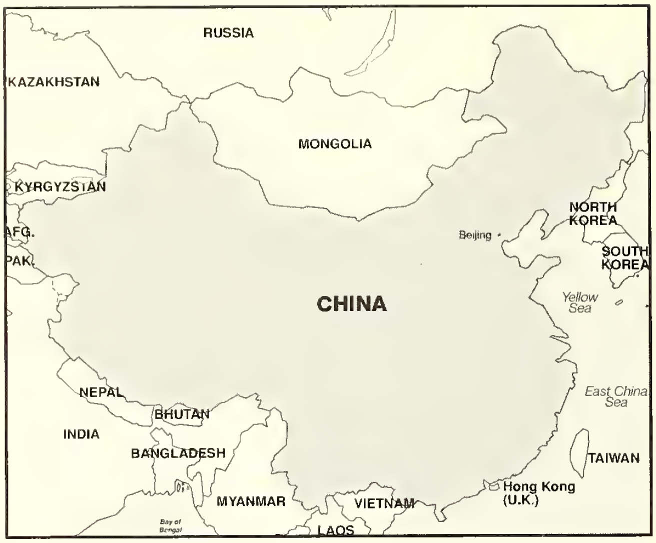
During travel we see many things that are strange and unusual to North American eyes. It is natural to want to take pictures of these things. But it is easy to insult your hosts by only taking pictures of things which poorly represent their country—beggars, hungry people, slums, etc. Think of how you would feel if a visitor to Canada or the United States insisted on only taking pictures of inner cities, junk yards and pollution. "That's not representative of my country!" we would say. Remember that when you visit another country. And if you do take pictures of people experiencing difficulty, remember also to balance them by taking pictures of people enjoying life.

Don't be offended if you are asked to pay for some pictures.

Some people will allow you to photograph them, but then ask for money. Don't be offended. Carry local change for this purpose. It's a small price to pay for a good photograph. And, to be fair, it's an exchange. You have taken something from your subject—his/her picture. Sometimes you will be asked to send a copy of a photograph to the subject. Don't promise to do so unless you intend to follow through. If it is impossible, say so, and then ask if you can still take a picture.

Picture-taking is an important part of overseas travel. But it can also be abused. When possible, get to know people before taking pictures. The relationships you enter into at that moment are far more important than a photograph in an album.

••• **Howard Zehr**
MCC Communications



MCC country profile

China

Population: 1.15 billion
MCC present through China Educational Exchange (CEE) since 1981
North American MCC workers: 9 out of a total of 25 CEE teachers
MCC 1993 program expenses: $67,392 U.S./$48,353 Cdn. ('93-'94 CEE budget: $175,000 U.S./$125,562 Cdn.)

Once characterized as a "sleeping giant" and the "sick man of Asia," in the past decade China has experienced dramatic economic growth. The World Bank now lists China as the world's third largest economy, trailing only the United States and Japan. Many believe China could surpass the United States in another 10 years. China's poverty rate has dropped from 33 percent in 1970 to 10 percent in 1990, an amazing feat considering that it has just 7 percent of the world's arable land but feeds 20 percent of the world's population. Estimates on per capita income range from $360 U.S./$258 Cdn. to $1,800 U.S./$1,291 Cdn.

Economic liberalization has proceeded with starts and stops since the late 1970s but now seems firmly entrenched. Almost all institutions, including schools, churches and seminaries, are being urged to contribute to the new "socialist market economy" by starting their own profit-making ventures. China's political future is far less certain, with the Communist Party remaining basically unchallenged in its rule. Major obstacles to China's continued growth include corruption, which has grown apace with economic opportunity, and the unrest of China's 900 million peasants, many of whom envy the unequal prosperity and subsidies their urban neighbors enjoy.

MCC has worked in China through the inter-Mennonite China Educational Exchange (CEE) program since 1981. CEE is a coalition of four Mennonite mission boards, MCC and the North American Mennonite colleges and seminaries. These institutions agreed that it would be much better for China and for the North American Mennonite church to work cooperatively rather than repeat the pre-1949 practice whereby Western mission agencies enjoyed separate spheres of influence in China.

In the past 13 years more than 150 North Americans have spent several years teaching English in China through CEE. In addition, five or six Chinese scholars are hosted annually by Mennonite colleges and seminaries. Some come to audit courses while others offer courses in Chinese language, culture and history to Mennonite college students preparing to spend time in China. CEE has also sponsored short-term medical, agricultural and veterinary exchanges.

Though there is no organized Mennonite church in China, there are Chinese living in areas of former Mennonite mission activity who still identify themselves as Mennonites. Ties have been re-established with these persons and groups in the past few years. Since 1985 CEE has assisted the Amity Foundation, the development and service agency of the China Christian Council, by seconding English teachers, recruiting persons to assist with the Amity printing press—which now publishes 1 million Bibles per year—and by making cash donations to Amity's Bible publishing and disaster relief efforts. Through CEE, MCC is also contributing to Amity's rural development projects in poor and remote parts of western China.

Is God calling you to fill one of these urgent personnel openings?

* * *

Bangladesh: Country representative

* * *

Akron: Program coordinator
Receptionist

* * *

Croatia: Peace consultant

* * *

Cambodia: Community forest coordinator

* * *

Brazil: Job creation coordinator

* * *

Haiti: Health educator/trainer

* * *

Nigeria: Medical doctor

If you are or someone you know is interested in any of these positions, contact MCC Personnel Services, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151. In Canada, contact MCC Personnel Services, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381.

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News from MCC

* * *

Students at the Friends of the Blind Association school in the Gaza strip are finding it easier to study because of a gift of $2,000 U.S./$2,680 Cdn. from MCC. Half of the funds are being used to buy the special paper required to print braille type; the paper costs $100 U.S./$134 Cdn. for 500 sheets. The school requires 70 sheets of paper each school day. The school, the only one for blind children in Gaza, has 24 students. In the photo above a young boy uses a braille book at the school.

* * *

The first permanent restaurant in the Innu community of Davis Inlet, Labrador, doesn't just serve burgers, fries and caribou stew—it also dishes out large dollops of pride and self-esteem for residents of a community that has mostly been portrayed as troubled of late. According to MCC worker Mark Bromley, the restaurant—the first and only Innu-owned business in Davis Inlet—"is a bit of good news in the community." The restaurant is the brainchild of two Davis Inlet residents; Bromley helped them draw up a business plan and apply for grants and loans from the federal and provincial governments, while MCC worker Ernie Wedel supervised the renovation of a trailer to house the new restaurant. "It's quite an accomplishment for the community," Bromley says.

* * *

The new MCC B.C. EcoTree project could be described as job creation or caring for the environment. A local newspaper called it "planting trees for Jesus." For Bruce Hiebert, who directs MCC B.C.'s job creation efforts, that's a good description of the program, which will find eight unemployed people planting 100,000 seedlings in B.C.'s lower mainland. "We want to take seriously the Bible's call to bring nature back to its God-intended state and at the same time provide meaningful short-term work," he says.

* * *

A press for making bricks inexpensively has moved a group of Mexican women closer to fulfilling their dream of a marketplace in their own town. The press, constructed by former MCC worker Mark Will, uses ordinary dirt mixed with water and small quantities of cement and lime. Pressing the bricks one by one, the women have cranked out 12,000 "adobe" bricks to construct 32 market stalls, bathrooms and offices in the town of Ahuatepec. When completed, townspeople will no longer have to travel to a nearby city for groceries and other needs. The marketplace will be used by the women to sell their goods and services.

* * *

The people of Homestead, Fla., said "thank-you" to Mennonite Disaster Service during the agency's annual all-unit meeting in that community in February. Homestead Mayor J.W. DeMilly told the MDSers that "we were blessed in that through this disaster we found the very best of our brothers and sisters in the world. There's no way we would be where we are without the help of our brothers and sisters." MDS was in Homestead from August 1992, until March, this year, doing clean-up and repair after Hurricane Andrew.

The Face(s) of Africa

Winnipeg artist Ray Dirks poses in front of a painting from his new exhibition called *The Face(s) of Africa* in Winnipeg. For Dirks, the exhibition of portraits of people from Africa living in Winnipeg and his previous show, *Africa: Art of the People*, was his attempt to show the "strength, dignity and diversity of Africans."

In *Face(s)*, Dirks allowed subjects to dictate their poses, apparel and backdrop. "The idea was to give them a chance to present themselves as they wished," he says, noting that the image of people in Africa is often dictated by others such as the media, which often only shows them against a backdrop of famine, war and disaster.

"That's not to say that famine and war can't be found in places in Africa," he adds. "But for the majority of Africans, that's not their day-to-day life," he says.

Africa: Art of the People, a collection of paintings by African artists and Dirks, has travelled across Canada and is currently in the United States. For more information about its schedule, or to bring it to your community, contact SELFHELP Crafts of the World, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501.

Cash projects

(July) Upgrading day care centers in Vietnam: Contributing to children's poor health in Trung My, Vietnam, is the sorry state of the community's day care centers. MCC will help upgrade the centers by installing tile floors, digging wells and toilets and providing basic supplies. $4 U.S./$5.35 Cdn. provides a wash basin, towel and soap for a day care center; $70 U.S./$93 Cdn. covers the cost of a well. Include project number B722-6011 with your contribution.

* * *

(August) Supporting self-help groups in India: Women in 10 villages in eastern India have initiated a savings program so they can borrow money to start businesses. MCC provides matching grants and training. $40 U.S./$54 Cdn. provides matching funds for one savings program; $140 U.S./$187 Cdn. provides training for one village. Include project number B708-3029 with your contribution.

* * *

(September) Providing Sunday school materials in Jordan: The St. George Orthodox Church in Amman has started a Sunday School program for refugee children who fled Kuwait in August 1990. MCC helps in this witness. $6 U.S./$8 Cdn. buys a Christmas gift for one child; $80 U.S./$107 Cdn. provides two blackboards. Include project number B856-7000 with your contribution.

Material resources projects

(July) Fabric: Bolts of new cotton yard goods (minimum 2 yards/1.8 meters) are frequently requested where fabric is expensive or hard to obtain. The cloth is used to sew children's clothing. Countries requesting fabric include Bangladesh, Haiti and Nicaragua.

* * *

(August and September) School kits: Include a school kit for a needy person on your back-to-school shopping list. Kits shipped early in 1994 include 3,300 to Haiti and 3,200 to Nicaragua. Egypt has requested 1,800. MCC Haiti gave this report: "Without the MCC school kits, many of the primary students might have only a single notebook for an entire year. The bag that comes with the kit is often seen as the best part since most students have nothing to carry books and supplies in."

Please include the following information with all contributions for Contact cash projects:

Name of project: ____________________

Your name: ____________________

Address: ____________________

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Conferencegoers share stories of abuse and healing

Hillsboro, Kan. (*Christian Leader*)—A house guest who is a leading Mennonite theologian and author—and a close friend of their family—assaults his hostess while her husband is away on a church-related business trip.

Suppressed memories of childhood horrors inflicted by a satanic cult, a cult that included his father and grandmother, devastate a survivor's personal and family life for years before flashbacks drive him to seek help and healing.

A women, near 50, was sexually violated as a child by a female close to her family; a teenage, male babysitter, and later her own father. For four decades she struggled with the shame, guilt and anger that have crippled her self-esteem and relationships.

These stories plus dozens more turned the meetinghouse of the Hillsboro (Kan.) Mennonite Brethren Church into a sanctuary of healing and hope April 22-23.

The event, titled "Hope for the Journey," was the sixth in a series of regional conferences on family violence and sexual abuse sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee since November 1990. Drawing about 270 people, it was the first such conference in the central states region.

The featured speaker for the weekend was Carolyn Holderread Heggen, a psychotherapist from New Mexico and author of the book *Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches*.

Heggen affirmed the courage of a growing number of survivors in recent years who, by speaking about their

Inside the news

Sexuality statement contentious at EDC / p. 14

MCC rethinks programs in China, Haiti / p. 15

South Africans welcome new government / p. 17

Bethel student lives with street children of Mexico City / p. 20

The Pilsen Mennonite Voluntary Service unit in Chicago is looking for used children's books in English and Spanish for ages 4-12. The unit wants to start a summer reading program. For more information, contact Terrance Rempel at Pilsen MVS unit, 2011 S. Loomis, Chicago, IL 60608, (312) 421-7185.

• • •

After abuse: steps of healing the church

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Presenters led a group of 36 through the steps of healing that follow sexual misconduct or abuse by a church leader April 15-16 at Sunnyside Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Ind.

The training team included David Brubaker of Casa Grande, Ariz., a church conflict consultant, and Chilton Knudsen of Chicago, an Episcopal priest and consultant to clergy misconduct cases. They recommended these steps:

Investigation: When allegations are made, an investigative team should investigate. At this point provide support for both the people bringing allegations and the person charged. This may include a process advocate, professional counseling and pastoral care. The person charged may be placed on leave, with pay, during the investigation.

Assessment: Obtain a professional assessment of the accused. The assessor should not be the accused person's counselor or a member of the investigative team. Professional assessment should be sought because offenders are skilled at denial and minimalizing. It is common for an offender in denial to seriously distort perceptions and processes.

Confidentiality: Keep the process confidential until the intervention team determines guilt or innocence.

Action: If the accused is deemed innocent, the intervention team takes steps to rebuild the accused party's reputation. If the accused is deemed guilty, the team recommends action, such as suspension, removal of credentials or removal from office, and recommends a recovery program.

Treatment: Treatment for offenders takes years, not months. Offenders often need three to five years of therapy to begin to take responsibility, develop empathy for victims' pain and begin recovery.

Congregational care: Intervention includes helping the congregation. Information sharing reduces anxiety. After the team has established guilt or innocence, meetings should be held for individuals to receive information and share feelings. Outside resource people help set up a process for ongoing dialogue and healing.

The Mennonite Church General Board stopped short of supporting a recommendation that the Mennonite Church merge with the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) by the year 2003. At meetings April 20-23 in Chambersburg, Pa., the board decided that it would send the recommendation to district conferences for more study. The board will revisit the issue in November. James Longacre, chair of the Council on Faith, Life and Strategy, told board members that "the board would be extremely remiss to continue to pass recommendations between the [Integration Exploration Committee] and the district conferences." GC general secretary Vern Preheim, however, told the MC board its decision was "very compatible" with the GC General Board's decision in March to approve the recommendation on condition that more detail be added. Lee Delp, GC board member, told the MC board that he senses a "move in a score-keeping direction" between the two boards over integration. "We have done very little work in gaining trust between us as general boards." (*Gospel Herald*)

The *Nonviolent Activist* reports on active antiwar groups in Serbia. The Anti-War Center in Belgrade continues to hold public marches in protest of the war, even under threat of violent attack from the regime's ultra-nationalists. One village, Tresnjevac, in northern Serbia, has chosen open defiance of the regime rather than allow its young men to be conscripted into the Yugoslav National Army. (*Salt*)

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Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

First graders in Tien Giang province, Vietnam, squat by troughs, using toothbrushes sent by North Americans through Mennonite Central Committee.

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The two church agencies responsible for publishing salary guidelines for Mennonite pastors in the United States have agreed to begin moving the two scales together. The General Conference (GC) Ministerial Leadership Services office publishes guidelines for GC pastors in the United States; the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries publishes guidelines for Mennonite Church pastors in the United States. Mennonite conferences in Canada distribute separate salary guidelines. A new system could take effect in 1995.

pain from sexual abuse and domestic violence, have challenged the church to confront it.

Heggen identified "three lies" within the Mennonite church that have contributed to its silence about domestic abuse:

- that the image of the church community is more important than the personal pain of individuals,
- that God intends men to dominate women and children,
- and that sexual attitudes are private and not the concern of the congregation.

Heggen also reminded participants that Satan and his demons are the true enemy behind abuse.

But it may have been the personal accounts of survivors themselves that penetrated most painfully. Testimonies of abuse involving church leaders were tragic, but particularly graphic in its depiction of evil was the story of David Neff, who as a boy endured—and was forced to participate in—unspeakable acts of abuse at the hands of a satanic cult based in his small hometown of Wayland, Iowa.

Neff challenged his listeners not to discount stories of satanic ritual abuse under the guise of "false memory syndrome" and other theories that attempt to explain away repressed memories. Neff said the church is "treating ritual abuse stories the same way [it] treated incest stories 15 years ago. … We want to deny that they really happened."

Satanic ritual abuse was one of 15 workshop topics offered during the weekend. Other workshops focused on equipping pastors, counselors and congregations, while a few served as sharing and support groups for survivors. *Don Ratzlaff*

Sexuality statement derails conference theme

Quakertown, Pa.—Delegates to the 196th Eastern District Conference want more time to consider a policy statement on human sexuality, which they discussed here April 29-30.

While the theme of the conference was "Living in Faithful Evangelism," the policy statement became a major focus during Saturday morning's plenary session. A number of delegates expressed surprise that the statement appeared in their report books with no advance notice. The schedule did not mention it.

"Are we going to search out all the sexual outlaws?"

Miller

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Joe Kotva, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Allentown, Pa., asked three questions of the EDC's executive committee, which prepared the statement: (1) Why not just affirm the General Conference Mennonite Church's 1986 resolution on human sexuality? (2) Why focus on sexuality first instead of other issues, like peace or how we use our money, which are more central to the New Testament? and (3) Why present this statement so close to the conference that there was not time for congregations to discuss it?

EDC vice president Craig Maven, pastor at Deep Run Mennonite Church West, Bedminster, Pa., presented the statement and represented the business administration committee, which, along with the EDC ministerial committee, had endorsed it. He said that the statement was not in response to any event and that its purpose was to state where the EDC is and to give guidelines for credentialing pastors. Further, whereas the 1986 GCMC action was a resolution, this was a policy statement.

The part of the statement that caused most of the debate was this: "We believe views of premarital, extramarital or homosexual sexual conduct as being acceptable are incompatible with Christ's standards. … Therefore, we cannot grant leadership credentials to or recognize the leadership credentials of persons who advocate or practice conduct to the contrary."

Joe Miller of Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, opposed it. "Are we going to search out all the sexual outlaws?" he said. "It says there can be discussion of honest differences, yet it only allows one interpretation of Scripture."

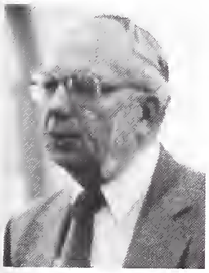
John Linscheid, also from Germantown Church, charged that "we're proposing to bind heavy burdens on people, while Jesus said, 'Come, all who are heavy laden.'"

Jonathan Yoder, pastor at East Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, which hosted the conference, said he would be "very disappointed if this is not passed."

Joyce Shutt, pastor at Fairfield (Pa.) Mennonite Church, recalled being on the outside when she was seeking ordination as a woman and was called unrepentant and rebellious when she wanted to serve God. She said she counsels homosexuals not toward celibacy but toward committed, monogamous relationships. She affirmed setting guidelines but feared they will be interpreted as exclusionary.

Paul Wikerd from Bethel Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., asked about other issues. He said, "We have never been able to make a policy about whether people can be members and be part of the military or about women in leadership."

EDC president Robert Gerhart, pastor at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa., explained that "what's different about [this area] is that people are advocating [homosexuality]."



"We have not set policy about joining the army or on women in leadership."
Wikerd

George Prichard, pastor at Lower Skippack Mennonite Church, Skippack, Pa., said that "the Bible is clear that these are sins," and to ordain a person who is practicing one of them would be to "slap God in the face."

Irvin Richert of Upper Milford Mennonite Church, Zionsville, Pa., moved to table voting on the statement until a future meeting so that congregations have more time to discuss it. The motion passed by ballot vote, 55 percent to 45 percent.

Because of the length of the discussion of the sexuality policy statement, less time was available for the conference theme. However, in two sessions, a panel of people from the dozen EDC congregations involved in the Living in Faithful Evangelism (LIFE) process told what they had learned thus far.

Several said that their research and experience showed that

- the majority of the population does not attend any church,
- the vast majority of visitors to their churches are friends or relatives of members,
- bringing in new people requires their congregations to be flexible, willing to make changes,
- intentionality is required, such as to begin small groups or train greeters.

In other business, delegates

- passed a budget of $205,300, a one percent increase over 1993;
- encouraged EDC representatives of the three GCMC commissions (education, home ministries and overseas mission) to attend meetings of the corresponding EDC committees;
- elected Craig Maven as president.

The EDC fall meeting will be hosted by Springfield Mennonite Church in Quakertown. *Gordon Houser*

MCC sees new possibilities in China, Haiti

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—The future direction of Mennonite Central Committee work in China and Haiti dominated the MCC executive committee's attention during meetings here April 8-9. In China new freedoms have presented new service opportunities; in Haiti oppression has made past MCC activities impossible.

Since 1981 MCC has worked in China through China Educational Exchange. Currently MCC sponsors nine of 23 CEE teachers, who teach English to some 6,000 university students.

But change over the past years has brought new opportunities. Ann Martin, MCC East Asia secretary, asked whether MCC should diversify its China involvements.

Martin presented a "menu of possibilities." Options include working with rural schools at the primary or secondary level; working with the Amity Foundation, a Chinese Christian-initiated voluntary organization,

India's skewed sex ratio is itself an index of anti-female discrimination, says Sakuntala Narasimhan in *The New Internationalist*. She reports the number of women per 1,000 males has fallen from 972 in 1900 to 933 in 1981. The 1980s saw increases in female infanticide and in the use of tests on unborn infants to determine sex and abort female fetuses. (*Salt*)

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Bread for the World reports that anti-hunger activists are more likely to be involved in religious activities than nonactivists. A multidenominational survey by Protestants showed that anti-hunger activists are more likely to engage in prayer and Bible reading than nonactivists. But most church members are not interested or involved in social activism. While 77 percent of church members in the survey said they are interested in studying the Bible, only 41 percent were interested in Christian perspectives on social and political issues, and only 20 percent in peacemaking and social justice. (*Hunger 1994*)

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A shift in how the Bible is studied will accompany the inauguration of the new curriculum for the Master of Divinity program at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., this fall. The shift moves from exegesis to exposition. Perry Yoder, professor of Old Testament, explains that exegesis focuses on detailed study of the text, while exposition involves a wider process of applying the text to life. "The process begins with study of the Bible in Hebrew and Greek and ends with an application for ministry settings," Yoder says. The Bible department initiated the shift toward exposition in response to the seminary's curriculum revision for the M.Div. degree. "We wanted to keep study of the biblical languages as a relevant discipline while working within the focus of preparation for ministry," Yoder says.

Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., will celebrate its 150th anniversary June 23-25, 1995. Contact the church at 64901 CR 11, Goshen, IN 46526, (219) 862-2595.

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Matthew Fox, an ordained Catholic priest and author of several books on creation spirituality, is moving to the Episcopal church. Fox had been dismissed from the Dominicans, his order for 34 years, and told to leave San Francisco and return to Chicago. Fox will continue working with his Institute in Culture and Creation Spirituality, located at Holy Names College, Oakland, Calif., a Catholic institution. He expects to be accepted as an Episcopal priest in December. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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A 1994 Barna Research Group survey shows that 74 percent of Christian respondents do not know what is meant by the phrase "The Great Commission." Fifty-seven percent do not know what the word "evangelicals" means, and 47 percent do not know John 3:16. Sixteen percent do not know what the phrase "the gospel" means. (*Ministry Currents*)

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Representatives of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan signed a historic church-to-church agreement in Taichung, Taiwan, Feb. 27. The agreement recognizes a sister relationship between the groups. In March 1993 the two groups agreed to dissolve General Conference mission in Taiwan by the end of 1993. "With the downsizing of the number of missionaries came the realization that the basic goals of the Mennonite mission work in Taiwan had been completed and the time was ripe for a change in the relationship," said Sheldon Sawatzky, COM worker in Taichung. Nineteen churches belong to the Taiwan Mennonite Church.

in rural development or medical rehabilitation; placing workers in Tibet; introducing North Americans to China by offering tours; inviting Chinese Mennonites in North America, Hong Kong, Taiwan and other Asian countries to participate in CEE's work; encouraging CEE teachers to speak about their experiences when they return from service; and providing the Mennonite press with more in-depth articles on China.

David Chiu, who recently completed nine years on the MCC executive committee, returned to participate in the discussion. "Asian Mennonite constituents have so much to offer. They should be asked to help shape the agenda in China, not just be given a list of established projects to choose from," he said.

Chiu, of Clearbrook, B.C., noted many North American Chinese travel to China regularly. "In terms of secular business we are contributing to building China. We could also do that with Chinese Christians.

"I don't think we should send missionaries. The Chinese church is growing rapidly without us," he said. "But I think we should plant seeds of justice." He said Mennonites, with their peace and justice perspective, have a unique understanding of the gospel, and he called for "a more prophetic MCC voice" in China.

The executive committee asked Martin to present the options she had outlined to the June CEE board meeting and bring feedback to the next MCC executive committee meeting.

Haiti: MCC workers in Haiti have traditionally trained Haitians as health and extension workers. In 1990 the MCC Haiti team planted 300,000 trees, taught 600 farmers soil conservation techniques—the majority of whom implemented them—and gave preventive health lessons to 52 community groups.

After the 1991 coup ousting Haitian president Jean Bertrand Aristide, the picture changed. Groups can no longer meet freely, hindering agricultural and health work. MCC's Haitian extension workers live under threat of violence; the Haitian military considers those who help or teach others to be subversive.

Despite the ecological damage, some farmers have reverted to planting their crops up and down steep slopes instead of across them since use of new techniques taught by extension workers is also considered subversive.

At one point, farmers even put their oxen in hiding. Local political leaders killed oxen in some areas—again because they represent "subversive" community work and threaten their economic control of the area, Linda Shelly told the executive committee. Shelly is MCC secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Unable to carry on agriculture and

Teaching in China: *Jonathan Toews, an MCC teacher from MacKenzie, B.C., teaches students at Shenyang Teacher's College in northern China. MCC has sent teachers to China since 1981. Now staff and executive committee ask whether MCC program in China should expand.*

RNS

Joy in suffering: *Haitian children play together. Political turmoil in Haiti is leading MCC to reconsider its work in that country.*

health activities, the MCC Haiti team is participating in an in-depth program review. Shelly said the Haiti team is considering placing workers in more of the conflict zones, where their presence as internationals could provide a degree of safety for Haitian community workers. Ideally the team would like to work with local Haitian churches and organizations.

Another possible change: MCC personnel would work directly with farmers, since group work is less risky when internationals are present. But such a change means many fewer farmers can be reached, Shelly said, since training Haitian educators to do group work had a significant multiplier effect.

"I'm supportive of such shifts because we are trying to find how to work in Haiti. We can't go back to pre-coup days," said Phil Rich, MCC executive committee member from Archbold, Ohio. "We're trying to combine meaningful work with being present with people in their struggles."

Rich's viewpoint represented the board's consensus.

In other business

- MCC controller Ken Langeman reported that U.S. contributions to MCC are down—some $200,000 less than first-trimester 1992 and 1993 contributions.
- With executive committee affirmation, MCC staff will develop a gender statement for MCC Overseas Services. The statement will include a checklist of questions to help program administrators focus on the issue of gender and development. One such question may be, "How will a given project or program meet women's practical needs?" says Gwen Groff of the MCC Peace Office.

South Africans celebrate new government

Umtata, South Africa (GCMC)—South Africans breathed a "sigh of relief" after the first democratic elections were held here in late April and early May without the expected bloodshed, reported Mennonite mission worker Gary Isaac, Umtata, South Africa. The majority of South Africans are also "ecstatic" about the election results that have made Nelson Mandela the country's next president and the African National Congress (ANC) the majority party.

"Ordinary people were apprehensive about the elections. They expected violence to occur and were uncertain about what this change was going to mean for their lives," wrote Isaac in a May 5 fax.

The uncertainty prior to the elections resulted in a number of strikes by civil servants. There also was some hostility toward whites.

"I had racial slogans shouted at me on a couple of occasions and hostile stares," wrote Isaac. Isaac and his wife, Jean, work in Umtata with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

Umtata was once located in Transkei, a separate homeland created

A new translation of the Bible is in the works in Cambodia. The translation began in exile during the recent years of Communist rule. Missionaries had lived there as early as 1555, but only a small church existed by the middle of this century. By 1975 there were 10,000 Christians in the country, but the 1975 Khmer Rouge regime banned all religion. Today a new peace in Cambodia has allowed the church to regroup. About 4,000 Christians remain there.

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Two-thirds of African-, Latino- and Asian-Americans say white Americans believe they are superior and "can boss people around," according to a survey of 3,000 people by the National Conference, a human relations organization. The survey also found that a majority of whites believe African-, Latino-, and Asian-Americans are given equal opportunities to obtain education and jobs. Members of the minority groups, in large measure, disagreed. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Mennonite Mutual Aid distributed nearly $150,000 in fraternal benefits throughout the General Conference Mennonite Church in 1993. Most of this assistance came in grants that matched funds raised by local congregations to meet a variety of needs. The majority of the General Conference grants were distributed through the Sharing Fund programs where General Conference churches matched $143,859 from MMA to benefit 129 families. Sharing Fund grants are used to help meet needs for assistance in paying health insurance premiums, meeting unpaid medical expenses, adoption expenses, burial expenses and needs caused by an accident, disaster or disability. MMA's fraternal benefit programs are available because part of MMA is classified as a tax-exempt fraternal benefit association. Funds that would have to be used for taxes are instead used to provide special assistance programs.

Manuel Elkin, a Colombian physician, has discovered a promising new vaccine against malaria. He has turned down millions of dollars from drug companies and donated the patent to the World Health Organization. "It is funny—the whole world is surprised," he says. "I am surprised that the whole world is surprised. This is for mankind. If someone develops something for the welfare of the people, it has to go to the people, and not to the pockets of the few." (*Calypso Log*)

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There have been no new orders in the commercial sector for nuclear reactors in the United States since 1973. But the U.S. Navy, currently the only entity constructing reactors, has built 74 in the past two decades, according to activist groups. They report that in 1993 the Navy fueled about 40 percent of its fleet from energy from 154 nuclear reactors. Irradiated uranium and plutonium, the core wastes of today's nuclear reactors, will be deadly toxic and in need of careful storage for at least 25,000 years. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Friendship Press has selected the Mennonite Central Committee-produced video *African Tales* as its 1994 children's video. Friendship Press is an ecumenical publisher of educational materials for schools and parishes. Each year the press promotes three videos—an adult, youth and children's video about their selected themes. The 1994 themes are "Making the World Safe for Children" and "African Churches Speak." African Tales, a 23-minute MCC video for primary grades, uses paintings and sound effects to tell three African fables. Another segment looks at Zaire through a child's eyes, showing food preparation, a market, homes, the village blacksmith and a church service. For free loan of the video contact MCC, (717) 859-1151; MCC Canada, (204) 261-6381; or the MCC office nearest you. The videos each cost $20 U.S. or $25 Cdn.

Harvey Harman (MCC)

On freedom road: *Black South African families have voted for their own national government for the first time in the history of the country.*

by the system of apartheid. Under the new government, homelands no longer exist. Transkei is now a part of the Eastern Cape province. Election results tallied on May 4 showed that the ANC received 85 percent of the vote in the Eastern Cape province.

After the elections Isaac wrote, "We have sensed a change of atmosphere as we do our business in Umtata. People generally seem friendlier.

"However, crime continues unabated," he wrote. Four armed gunmen stole a vehicle from one of his friends —who had been working as an electoral officer—at 5:30 p.m. on May 3. The vehicle was the property of the Independent Electoral Commission. Four IEC vehicles were stolen in Umtata during the elections.

"Much of the criminal activity relates to the perception that the police force is ineffective, so anyone may do as he or she pleases without fear of being apprehended," wrote Isaac. Illegal firearms are readily available.

"The holding of South Africa's first all-inclusive elections is a 'miracle.' When we first came in 1986, the situation looked so bleak that I didn't expect the kind of change we are seeing could happen within 20 years, if at all, without a bloodbath," wrote Isaac.

"There are many factors which forced this change. ... The internal pressure by the liberation organizations and masses of black people was relentless and most of it nonviolent. The government began to see that it could no longer hope to control the masses. The economic pressure of sanctions was also becoming unbearable," wrote Isaac.

Communism: Also, he wrote, the collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union made it possible for the South African government to believe that South Africa would not fall under communism if it acceded to black rule.

"The personalities involved also were crucial. F.W. De Klerk made daring and unpopular decisions (among whites). Mandela went out of his way to appease white fears even to the extent of making himself unpopular with some ANC radicals," wrote Isaac.

While the ANC fell just short of winning the two-thirds majority it needed to have a free hand in writing the constitution, the party will be the strongest voice in that process. In his victory speech, Mandela promised to abide by principles set out in the interim constitution. In the interest of national unity, he seems willing to give cabinet posts to some parties that don't have the required 5 percent of the vote.

"South Africa has made a new beginning," wrote Isaac. "The task ahead is awesome, but given the goodwill of the majority of its people, great strides can be made in relieving the burden of poverty and injustice that the masses now carry." *Carla Reimer*

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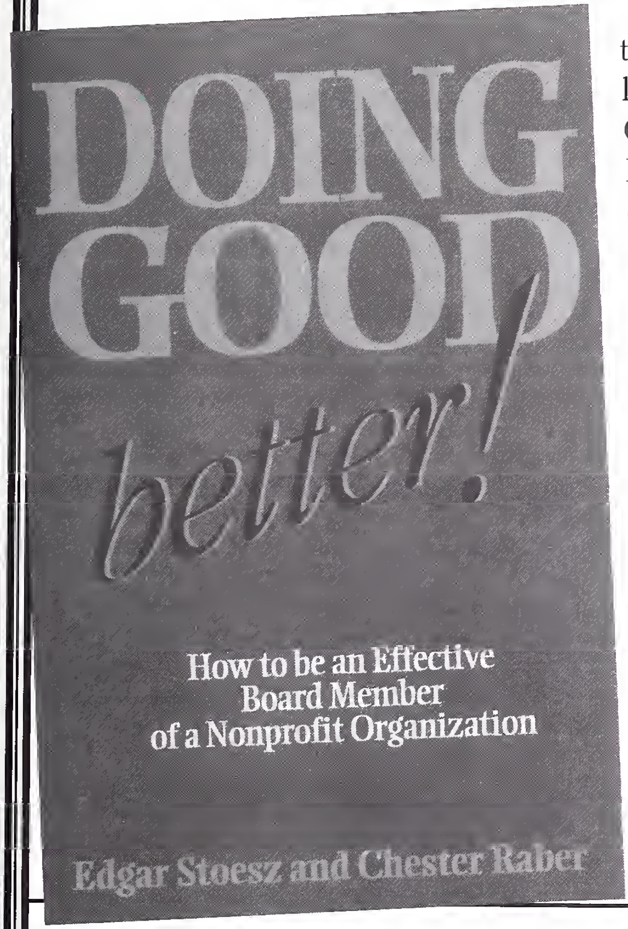
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The first summer workshop of the newly-formed Institute for Conflict Studies and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite College in Harrisonburg, Va., will be held June 20-23 on the EMC campus. "Frontiers in International Peacebuilding" is designed for people interested in interethnic and intercommunal conflict on an international scale. The workshop is available for graduate and undergraduate credit. Registration deadline is June 1. Contact Cheryl Helmuth at (703) 432-4456.

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New York state is considering a proposal to fingerprint welfare recipients. Proponents say it is the most inexpensive way to reduce fraud in an easily deceived welfare system. New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said he would consider handing over the welfare fingerprint records to law enforcement officials. Los Angeles County, which is already fingerprinting welfare recipients, has decided to expand its general assistance fingerprinting program to include recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Wal-Mart has stopped selling handguns. The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America has written to the head of the corporation to thank executives for the decision. "We know that guns do not cause the epidemic of violence," wrote BPFNA executive director Ken Sehested in a January letter. "But the easy availability of handguns dramatically increases the potential for destruction." He noted that there are more gun dealers (over 270,000) registered in the United States than there are gas stations. (*Christian Century*)

Bethel senior meets street children of Mexico

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Steve Stonehouse, a college senior, has spent the last two months living with 10 street children in one of the world's most crowded megalopolises—Mexico City.

Overwhelmed at first, Stonehouse now says this experience—"the hardest thing I have done in my life"—has been invaluable.

Stonehouse is one of six participants in the first joint Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.)/Mennonite Central Committee Mexico Internship Program. He lives and works in a group home in Mexico City "parenting" 10 adolescents who are in their third and hopefully final step in the transition to life off the streets.

"Carlos," 17, has almost made it. He moved onto the streets at age 10 and for many years followed a daily survival routine. Mornings he begged for money. With half that money he bought glue. In the afternoon he took refuge in a movie theater, spending the other half.

Carlos sniffed glue into the evening until he passed out. The glue numbed him enough to sleep on the streets.

Carlos now works for a swimming pool company and volunteers at a prison. Stonehouse talks a lot with Carlos about his future. Carlos' current dilemma is deciding whether to marry or to wait until his life is more solid financially.

Stonehouse says the street children he knows fit a pattern. Most come from homes where the father has left. When a stepfather arrives, he does not want to care for another man's children. Abuse or neglect tempts the child to try it alone on the street.

Home street home: Rarely does a child leave home one day and never return, Stonehouse says. They gradually stay away from home for longer periods until at some point the street becomes "home." The freedom of street life and addiction to glue make it nearly impossible for a street child to re-enter society, Stonehouse says.

Nonetheless, "a large percentage of children who remain on the street face certain early death from overdosing, AIDS or violence," says Laurel Neufeld Weaver, Stonehouse's fieldwork supervisor and an MCC volunteer. "One of the hardest experiences Steve had was having to take kids for AIDS testing. They were scared because they knew they might have it."

Seeking protection from a "benefactor" in return for sexual favors is not uncommon, Stonehouse explains.

The organization Stonehouse works for offers three tiers of shelters for street children—a 24-hour, open-door refuge; transitional homes for children who have decided to return to school or prepare for jobs; and group homes for children ready to attempt full reintegration into society.

When Stonehouse graduates in May, he hopes to find a social work job. He says he has gained confidence, independence and self-knowledge.

"I've learned I can handle a challenge; I've also learned I need to reach out when I need support and that I'm not going to save the world," he says.
Emily Will

Invaluable experience: *Bethel College student Steve Stonehouse, of Wilmot, S.D., with the Mexican family that hosted him during his weeks of Spanish study in Cuernavaca*

Record

MINISTERS

Robert Cahill has finished his term as interim pastor at First Church, Upland, Calif.

Gary Jewell, Shalom Fellowship, Spokane, Wash., was licensed for ministry Feb. 13.

Teresa McDermid is beginning this month as pastor at Sunrise Church, Clackamus, Ore. **Elmer Friesen** has been interim pastor there.

Michael Peak will begin July 1 as pastor at First Church, Paso Robles, Calif.

Clarence E. Rempel will begin Sept. 1 as pastor at First Church, Newton, Kan.

Rebecca Slough will end her pastorate at First Church, San Francisco, to be field education director and director of congregational studies at Bethany Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

Randy Smith has been named campus minister at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. He had been pastor at Hope Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

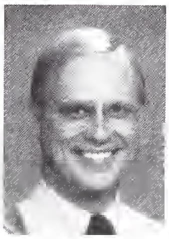
Dennis Stauffer was installed Jan. 23 as senior pastor at Sunnyslope Church, Phoenix.

WORKERS

Thomas L. Detwiler has been named associate director of development and director of major gifts at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Ernie Regehr has been named interim president of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., beginning July 1. He replaces **Rodney Sawatsky**, who will become president of Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.

Peter and **Lois Voran**, Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., will serve a one-year Commission on Overseas Mission term in Japan at the Anabaptist Center in Tokyo. Peter recently completed interim pastorates at First Church, Hillsboro, Kan., and Turpin (Okla.) Church.



Smith

Emmanuel Mennonite Church of Winkler, Man., is looking for a full-time **leading pastor**. Starting time is negotiable.

Please send resumé to **Pastoral Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 960 Pembina Ave., Winkler, MB R6W 1X4.**

Goshen College seeks applicants for **college physician** beginning Aug. 1. Qualifications include an M.D., medical staff eligibility at Goshen Hospital, residency in family practice with experience in one or more of the following: college health, public health, international medicine or internal medicine. Responsibilities include supervising medical services to students, promoting a philosophy of holistic health care and possibly teaching. This position is one-third time at Goshen College. However, it could be combined with a private practice. Minority people encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resumé and the names of three references to **Norman Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526**. Application deadline: **June 1**.

Elementary teacher, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, full-time voluntary service position in small, K-8, urban, multicultural school. Housing, living expenses, health insurance, personal stipend provided. Living quarters near school. Bachelor's degree and certification required. Ten-month contract begins Aug. 22. Minority applicants especially welcome.

Send letter of application and resumé to **Russel Liechty, CMLC, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632.**

Positions open at **Freeman Academy** for 1994-95:

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To apply, send letter and credentials to **Leroy Saner, Principal, Freeman Academy, Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029; (605) 925-4237.**

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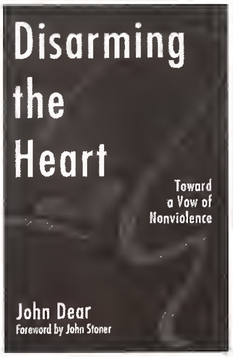
BOOKS

Life of nonviolence

Disarming the Heart: Toward a Vow of Nonviolence *by John Dear (Herald Press, 1993, 192 pages)*

Reviewed by David Janzen, Evanston, Ill.



Ten years ago the Jesuit John Dear entered a season of prayerful study and reflection, resulting in a vow of nonviolence that has set him on a radical path of peacemaking. The consequences of this vow have led him to oppose war and death with prayer and direct actions in the United States, the Philippines, Guatemala, Nicaragua, the Middle East and Haiti. This book is about his pilgrimage, his discoveries and his passion.

Dear's book helps us grasp how the acts of violence we see in the news are rooted in attitudes we need to renounce. "Violence can range from the hatred that lingers in our hearts to the weapons that destroy humanity."

Violence means forgetting the good news that we are children of one God who has reconciled us in Christ. As the life of nonviolence grows, it not only disarms the heart, but it opens our eyes to structures of privilege that oppress the weak, and it becomes a commitment to struggle with others to transform the forces of violence and injustice in our world.

This book might have been stronger if the author had used more stories from his own or others' experiences and had shortened his sometimes repetitious analyses of violence. His arguments for direct action are illustrated by the chapters on Gandhi and Jesus, who demonstrated a nonviolence that was both inward and public.

John Stoner in the book's foreword urges all our churches to use it with our baptismal candidates. Though we may not choose to join John Dear in all his actions, we can trust the spirit of this book, which offers prophetic witness arising from prayer, group discernment and Christ's victory over death.

Faith, politics, Holy Land

Who Are God's People in the Middle East? *by Gary M. Burge (Zondervan, 1993, 207 pages)*

Reviewed by Terrance Rempel, Chicago

"Many of us in the evangelical community live with a troubled conscience. … Our excitement at living in 'the last days' and our ready support of Israel has led us to overlook some devastating facts about our faith, the Middle East, and what God would have us do."

Who Are God's People in the Middle East? examines the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the eyes of the Old and New Testament prophets. The book, which challenges the theological understanding of many Western Christians toward the state of Israel, is as much a testimony of the author's journey of faith as it is a call to all Christians to re-examine their faith as it relates to the Holy Land.

Burge addresses the contemporary issues that concern the peoples of all three monotheistic faiths—Jews, Muslims and Christians. However, he gives special emphasis to the plight of the Palestinian Christian church, which has had a continuous presence in the Holy Land for 2,000 years but has often felt ignored by Christians from outside the Middle East.

While the book does address the biblical and ethical inconsistencies of the modern state of Israel, Burge seems unwilling to challenge the notion that the birth of Israel in 1948 was anything but a miraculous act of God. Some readers may also find that Burge's historical analysis, which is generally balanced, does revert at times to his Israel-centered evangelical roots.

The strength of the book, however, lies in the author's ability to draw parallels between the Scriptures and the powerful stories of the people who live in occupied Palestine and in Israel.

Who Are God's People in the Middle East? is both a good introduction to the land of Israel/Palestine and a good book to stimulate discussion for those seeking to make the connection between faith and action in a world occupied by hatred and oppression rather than the love and mercy of Christ.

Ken and Kass invite you to come along to the mysterious Petra in Jordan, to the awesome pyramids in Egypt, with all of Israel in between.

Lands of the Bible **September 6-20** **Ken and Kass Seitz**

Write or call for information about this or our European tours:
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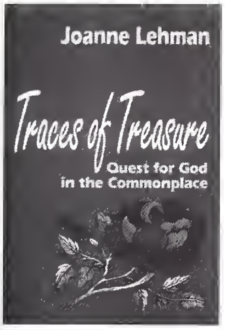
Everyday spirituality

Traces of Treasure: Quest for God in the Commonplace *by Joanne Lehman, with foreword by Katie Funk Wiebe (Herald Press, 1994, 147 pages)*

Reviewed by Edna Krueger Dyck, Newton, Kan.



A book on spirituality that you can't put down? Lehman's book of short essays and poems does not have an exciting plot or riveting action, but I found myself picking it up to browse through again and again. Always I was interested, sometimes pushed to reflection, often inspired.

By her own admission, Lehman loves words. In an engaging writing style she offers "traces of one disciple's treasure—present in simple things as well as in the larger events of life, an elemental spirituality." The "simple things" include busyness in "God of the Calendar and the Daytimer," donning skates after many years in "You Never Forget How to Skate," and having lunch with her husband in "On Doing an Intimate Lunch." The "larger events" Lehman deals with include the traumas of an automobile accident, of finding a lump in her breast, and the horrors of the Gulf War.

In the "Stories of Self" section of the book, Lehman reveals personal stories and thoughts. The reader is introduced to her family, her process of becoming a writer and her tensions of being wife, mother and career woman. I marveled at her willingness to be so vulnerable in exposing personal thoughts and experiences.

Occasionally I thought the personal nature of the details—mentioning a college professor or a pastor by name, for instance—was more than I needed as a reader. I wondered also about the use of acronyms like "WMSC" and "MEDA," known in the Mennonite world but not decipherable by the public.

The 18 poems range from Advent to the kitchen to love for her husband. Some are thought provoking, others playful. My favorite is "Compupsalm," where she sings the praises of her "IBM compatible."

Traces of Treasure is a book for recreational reading and enjoyment. More than this the words challenge us to see everyday events in spiritual terms. Lehman says it better: "Perhaps in my writings ... [you] will glean traces of treasure from my quest for God in life's commonplace events." Writers, she says, are the prophets in our day, believing that words *can* make a difference. She hopes that her words will contribute to the building of God's kingdom as readers "live the questions in a community of compassion and hope, of spiritual disciplines and prayer, and of shouldering social responsibility."

Necessary pain

Pain: The Gift Nobody Wants *by Dr. Paul Brand and Philip Yancey (HarperCollins, 1993, 352 pages)*

Reviewed by Bonnie Krehbiel, North Newton, Kan.

This book is a peculiar combination of biography, medical research and personal philosophy. The authors interweave these elements as they illustrate the magnificent intricacy of the human body and contend that pain is a necessary part of it.

The book is divided into three sections. The first is biographical and traces Dr. Brand's childhood in India and his eventual decision to pursue medicine.

The second part highlights Brand's work in India and Carville, La., as a physician and researcher with leprosy patients. It documents much of his research in the field of leprosy, leading to the discovery that leprosy patients lose limbs due to lack of pain and not because of the disease itself. Numerous anecdotes about patients, their struggles with painlessness and the consequent disastrous results will give any reader a new respect for pain.

The third part of the book, "Learning to Befriend Pain," was probably the least convincing. Although I found myself agreeing with many of Brand's conclusions (one being that Western countries are becoming less and less competent at handling pain), the rambling, repetitive writing in this section detracted from the arguments.

People living daily with chronic pain will likely find some of Brand's ideas for "befriending pain" inadequate for the complex problem of pain management. In spite of these weaknesses, the ideas in this section do make one rethink pain. Certainly the book as a whole will help readers appreciate the "gift of pain" and its role in healing the human body.

Resources

- **Haiti: Renewal in Adversity** is a 10-minute video featuring Mennonite and Church of the Brethren participants in Christian Peacemaker Teams' work in Haiti. U.S. and Canadian CPT members share firsthand accounts of persecution of Haitian friends. Available from Christian Peacemaker Teams, P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 455-1199; $10.95 U.S. (includes handling).
- **Focus: Telling Stories With a Video Camera** is a 24-page handbook to help amateur camcorder operators create more professional-looking videos. Order from MBM Media Ministries, (800) 999-3534, $3 U.S.
- **TV spots on family** are available for airing on your local television stations. "The Family Game" includes one 30-second spot of a lonely boy with absent parents, and another showing an unathletic father playing basketball with his children. For information contact MBM Media Ministries, (800) 999-3534.
- **Old Testament Ethics: A Paradigmatic Approach** by Waldemar Janzen (Westminster/John Knox, 1994, $19.99 U.S.) provides a way of understanding the ethical message in the Old Testament using five models of the good life: the holy life, the wise life, the just life, the serving and suffering life and the familial paradigm.
- **Early Anabaptist Spirituality: Selected Writings**, Daniel Liechty, ed. (Paulist Press, 1994, $19.95 paper/ $29.95 cloth U.S.), focuses on 16th-century writings that illuminate the distinctive character of Anabaptist spiritual experience.

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Editorial

God's poem

We are created to create. Ephesians 2:10 says, "We are God's work of art" (The New Jerusalem Bible), and we are created to do "good works" as "our way of life." In imitation of our Creator, we also create.

The writer uses the Greek word "poiema," from which we derive "poem." It refers to something that is made, and in this case that something is ourselves, humanity, the entire world.

When we look closely at what God has made, we learn that God's artistry is truly amazing. Look at the diversity among human beings alone. Each of us is complex, and each of us is different from any other human.

Let's encourage our artists. Let them explore the horizons of their faith and show us new ways of looking at the world.

If we are to be imitators of God, if we are to do "good works," shouldn't those works also display variety, complexity, beauty, imagination, originality? Yet we tend to stifle anyone among us who creates something outside the mold of our standard ideas of what is good or beautiful. We try to reign in or send away those whose imaginations take them in directions even they may not have guessed. We too often tie ropes around our artists or exile them to a life of isolation or to some other community.

In this issue we offer brief accounts of three visual artists (see pages 3-6) who are Mennonite. Each has had his or her own struggles in practicing art while remaining in the Mennonite community. While some raise their eyebrows at Erma Martin Yost (page 6), her growing up on a farm, where "making things was a way of life," reinforced her pursuit of art. She had to overcome her own timidity.

Sandy Zeiset Richardson (page 3), on the other hand, had to face a denigration of visual communication as opposed to verbal communication. She also struggled with the strong Mennonite belief in practicality, which often looks upon art as useless. What good is a painting? many ask. Or a sculpture? Sandy agrees that the world does not need more things, but it does need meaning. And that is what she seeks to incorporate in her work.

Artists struggle enough with their own inadequacies, their own uncertainties about their work and whether or not they are really artists. The further weight of a community's expectations that in creating a work they are being frivolous or unproductive is crushing.

Mozart sonata: Artists lighten our lives, add beauty to our environment. They touch our emotions, whether that be joy or anger, delight or despair. They also challenge our usual perceptions, help us look at the world—or at ourselves—in a new way. Often this feels uncomfortable. We'd rather relax with a Mozart sonata than be jolted by a Sylvia Plath poem.

Of course, the Sermon on the Mount can also leave us uneasy. But when an artist from our midst presents a different point of view, we may make them feel less than welcome.

Instead let's encourage our artists. Let them explore the horizons of their faith and show us new ways of looking at the world. If we are secure in God's love, we will not be threatened by such explorations. Rather we will receive them and then judge whether or not they are "good works." Many will not be. But if we shut out artists altogether, we will miss many that are good.

When we follow artistic impulses, we are responding to our being created in the image of God. We *need* to create, whether that be a special dinner or a birdhouse for the backyard, a quilt for our bed or a litany for next Sunday's worship. A way of life devoted to "good works" requires imagination, courage, faith, love and a measure of sweat.

All of us are called to good works, but a few are called to a more specific work of making things for the wider community. Although artists need a measure of solitude to do their work, they also need a community to receive their work and help bring it meaning. In being such a community we also honor our Creator. *Gordon Houser*

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Inside

To cut the ropes that bind / p. 8

Do the right thing / p. 11

Parents on trial / p. 12

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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The year of the family

- Ways to support family life wherever you live (see page 3)
- My Swazi family (see page 7)

Prologue

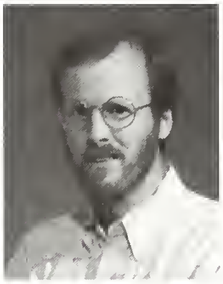
Family life is central to who we are. It is the basis of human society and certainly of the church. Some have described the trinitarian God as a kind of family.

In this issue, beginning on page 3, we offer a list of ideas for supporting family life, in families, churches, workplaces, neighborhoods, schools and the media. Each of us should find at least a few that we can put into practice. Many of us are already practicing some of these.

"Family" can have different meanings. Read one mission worker's story about the family that adopted her when she worked in Swaziland (page 7).

Then read a moving story of a man whose father used silence and control against his son (page 8). Find out who was really enslaved and how God worked in that situation.

J.B. Miller (page 11) tells of an experience that challenges our sense of what is right. It serves as a parable that can provoke a good discussion. Perhaps your Sunday school class or prayer group would like to use it that way.



Parenting is hard work that offers few guarantees, says columnist Sara Wenger Shenk (page 12). All parents need our support.

We've been receiving many letters, for which we are grateful. However, please keep them brief. Otherwise we'll have to shorten them.

Have a refreshing summer. *gh*

Next issue: Cell groups in the church

Cover: Photo by Carolyn Prieb

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The year of the family

How to support family life wherever you are

This idea checklist will assist your celebration of the International Year of the Family 1994. It was developed by the Premier's Council in Support of Alberta Families in consultation with local communities.

1994 has been proclaimed International Year of the Family by the United Nations General Assembly. The theme of the year is "Family: Resources and Responsibilities in a Changing World."

...in families

- Interview family members about the traditions, history and lifestyle of previous generations (consider recording the interview for future generations).
- Reach out to a relative and involve him or her in a special event—go to a movie or see a play together.
- Have all family members contribute to the planning of a special family event, such as a holiday celebration.
- Plan a family reunion.
- Share with each other the best part of your day, what you like best about your family, your hopes for the future, your interests, concerns and values.
- Discuss the meaning and value of honesty, respect, courtesy, responsibility, self-discipline and their importance in your family.
- Discuss the traditions in your family and how they developed, e.g., pizza and movies on Fridays, special foods, bedtime rituals, religious events.
- Invite the families of your children's friends for a visit or to share a meal.
- Develop a family tree.
- Adopt a senior (grandparent).
- Set aside time for family evenings and mark them on your family calendar so other events won't interfere.
- Tell each other what you like about one another.
- Consider setting aside special time for individual members in the family. Make a date with each family member.
- Ask family members for ideas on what you can do together, then schedule time for suggested activities.
- Tape record or write a family letter to be opened in the future or sent to a relative.
- Gather family photographs and develop a family pictorial history.
- Where appropriate, arrange to have your children visit your workplace for a day, for lunch or a tour.
- Establish a family reading time when everyone sits and reads together or to each other; discuss with each other some interesting aspects of what you've read.
- Start a family council for family decision making and problem solving.
- Develop a schedule for all family members to share household or other family tasks.
- Get your family, co-workers, friends or neighbors together for a brainstorming session to consider what you can contribute to make the International Year of the Family meaningful.
- Form or join existing community action groups to address issues of concern that you share with other families.
- Review the music, movies, books, television shows that your children are exposed to. Discuss with the children your values, concerns, perspectives.
- Cooperate with each other to allow each family member a break from their regular duties.
- Have each family member tell a story at a family meal time.
- Take time to play.
- Start a family book in your home

Establish a family reading time when everyone sits and reads together or to each other.

the BIG FARM BOOK

where guests can leave a message.
- Design a piece of refrigerator art that reflects an aspect of your family: relatives, ethnic roots, family values.
- Start a family hobby project.
- Start a volunteer service project: save money for a needy family, visit a hospital or seniors' home, donate household items.
- Go on an excursion together to the park, picnic, book fair, exhibit, movie or walk.

...in churches

- Find ways to incorporate a family focus and activities in worship and fellowship. Get input from members of the congregation.
- Invite nonmember families to dinners held by your church.
- Incorporate articles on family life in newsletters.
- Plan a family-focused sermon.
- Involve all members of families in service activities.
- Organize some family functions in your faith community (for example, a film series, a special speaker, a family meal or tea, or a family winter weekend retreat).
- Include a family-focused musical selection in your service.
- Families in the congregation could consider volunteering their time and/or resources to a family with special needs.
- Include the IYF logo in announcements of events to celebrate the Year.
- Adopt a family that needs extra help or support.
- Organize family forums to discuss current issues with family members and proposed social action strategies.
- Develop a checklist to assess the family friendliness of the environment and activities of your place of worship.
- Discuss with your faith community the priority that is placed on family activities.

...in workplaces

- Assess your workplace policies for their sensitivity to families.
- Consider implementing a "warm line" for parents to check on their children after school.
- Review research on family-sensitive workplace policies and their impact on productivity. Consider changes that you can make at the worksite.
- Include all family members in parties and outings sponsored at or held by the workplace.
- Designate a special day to invite parents to bring their children to the workplace, where appropriate.
- Plan a family luncheon at the workplace.
- Include articles on family life in the employee newsletter.
- When making announcements about employee awards or promotions, consider including information about the employee's family.
- Hold a baby picture contest to match the baby picture with the employee.
- Include the IYF logo in announcements of events to celebrate the Year.

What is a family?

Family forms the basic unit of society, valued for the important socioeconomic functions it performs. It provides the framework for emotional, financial and material support essential to the growth and development of its members, particularly children, and for the care of others: elderly, people with disabilities and the infirm. In addition the family is vital in preserving and transmitting cultural values

...in neighborhood

- Organize a block party.
- Organize a family community clean up.
- Hold a neighborhood/community breakfast, potluck supper or picnic for families.
- Organize a sidewalk art festival, theater or music event with a family theme.
- Hold a neighborhood forum for family members of all ages about ways

to strengthen families and enhance neighborhood support for families.

- Recognize families that have made a contribution to your community.
- Organize recreational days for all family members: skating, tobogganning, hockey, baseball, family walks, cycling.
- Organize an exhibit on families at your municipal library, school or community club.
- Organize a family photo contest.
- Set up a volunteer network to provide assistance for families caring for members with disabilities.
- Set up special community and neighborhood collection days or special fund-raising events in aid of families of people with disabilities.
- Organize a workshop exploring ways to improve family life in your community. Develop an action plan to implement positive changes for the future.
- Set up a community garden plot for disadvantaged families.
- Research the archives to find out which significant historical families were in your community in areas such as the arts, sports, business and public life.
- With the participation of your local television station, include young people in a television forum on an issue of concern and how it could be resolved.
- Circulate a calendar of community events designed for families.
- Review your neighborhood or community's recreational programs to assess how available they are to family members of all ages.
- Invite families to create a community mural depicting family life.
- Host a family dance, family scavenger hunt, family picnic.
- Identify sources of family support and protection in your neighborhood (for example toxic roundups, block parents, police) and ensure awareness of their role and support to families.

...in schools

- Have students plan and host an open house for family members or other relatives.
- Have students and/or visiting family members place markers on a world map that identify where their relatives and ancestors have lived.
- Invite family members to participate with school staff in discussing their aspirations for the school.
- Include the IYF logo on announcements of events.
- Establish a schedule of activities for IYF and communicate via a "calendar of events" for the Year.
- Develop a "Book of Family Treasures" in which students submit pictures, photographs and favorite family recipes to illustrate treasures that have special meaning to them.
- Consider selecting a student a week for special attention. This "VIP" student would take a specially designated box and return it with mementos of home life, e.g., favorite family foods, photographs or family heirlooms.
- Invite a panel of parents and professionals to listen and respond to presentations from the classroom on a series of topics related to family life.
- Incorporate a family focus in the curriculum, wherever appropriate.
- Develop resource kits for teachers, highlighting ideas for IYF and incorporating some activities from this list.
- Develop school projects that foster contact between and among families of different cultures.
- Bring community role models such as sports, business and political figures into the classroom to speak to students about the impact of their families, past and present, on their current positions.
- Incorporate articles of interest to families in the school newspaper.
- Hold an essay, poster, poetry or art contest on aspects of family life, e.g., "What is important about my family?", "What makes a family a family?" or, "How I see family life in the future." Display work at school, in

Rich Preheim

Develop school projects that foster contact between and among families of different cultures.

A heart sheltered by a roof, linked by another heart, to symbolize life and love in a home where one finds warmth, caring, security, togetherness, tolerance and acceptance—that is the symbolism conveyed by the emblem of the International Year of the Family 1994. The open design is meant to indicate continuity with a hint of uncertainty. The brush stroke, with its open line roof, completes an abstract symbol representing the complexity of the family.

public places or in the community newspaper. Consider selecting work for inclusion in an IYF anthology on families, from the perspective of youth.

- Invite seniors and parents to participate in the school program by sharing different aspects of family life.
- Survey parents to identify the factors that contribute to and detract from their involvement.
- Hold forums on topics of interest to parents and family members.
- Hold a speech/debate/discussion on some aspect of family life.
- Brainstorm with your students about ideas to celebrate IYF.
- Share a meal at your school with family members and relatives—consider a multicultural orientation.
- Plan assignments that focus on family traditions, values or relationships.
- Create a mural in your school in which every child contributes something that depicts his or her family.

...in the media

- Ask radio and television listeners to phone in a special message to their children or for children to comment on "What my parents did right."
- Highlight some of the positive aspects of family life in the media; for example, emphasize and promote positive family values and good news stories of families or provide television and radio spots to focus on what works in effective families.
- Establish a slogan for the Year that focuses on families.
- Promote awareness of family concerns and issues—consider a forum on various aspects of family life today.
- Produce special family inserts or features, or develop programs to promote various aspects of family life.
- Provide public service announcements to inform people about the services and resources available to families in the community or information about upcoming events.
- Recognize families who have made exceptional contributions or who have overcome significant challenges and obstacles in their lives.
- Produce television and radio shows and feature articles that highlight family issues and family strengths, joys and hopes.
- Promote community activities related to IYF through radio, television and other news media.
- Hold phone-ins to get ideas from various communities on how they are celebrating IYF and Family Day.
- Highlight local groups who are committed to bettering family life.
- Profile a day in the lives of different kinds of families in your community.
- Connect distant family members over the air for brief exchanges.
- Interview family members from different backgrounds and circumstances about their hopes and aspirations for their families and/or children.
- Include the IYF logo on print materials that highlight the Year.

Jeffrey High

Recognize families who have made exceptional contributions.

My Swazi family

Family gives us our identity. Christians are children of God and thus family, wherever they may live.

JoAnn Wiens

I know my blood family, farmers of middle-upper society in rural Canada. Their farm provided me with a peaceful place in which to develop and explore. The friendliness of rural people did much to shape me.

When I was a single working in Africa, my blood family and I kept in touch through letters, occasional phone calls and care packages. But the slow mail systems reminded me that I was far from home.

In Swaziland the Magagulas became my family. A loving Christian mother and sisters and brothers took me, a stranger from a different culture, language and social class on the other side of the world, into their home. For three months I lived in a small thatched "rondavel" on the Magagula homestead.

I was like a child in a grownup's body. I could make sounds, but to others it sounded like an infant's babble. I felt trapped in my adult body and didn't like floundering like an infant. But at times the humor of the situation relieved my frustration.

My identity came from my work as a nurse at Emkhusweni Health Center, but more importantly it came from my family. People introduced me by my Swazi name, "Nonhlanhla Magagula." My first name means "fortunate." My "mother" gave it to me because she felt she was lucky to have another member of the family to replace a child who died. I like my Swazi name. I feel fortunate.

Each morning I arose at 6:00 and had an hour to myself before starting daily activities of the homestead life. I enjoyed this precious time to pray, think, plan the day's lesson and write letters. Then my "sister-in-law" arrived at my door with water jugs in hand. We walked five minutes down to the water standpipe. This daily chore provided me with time to meet other children and mothers. On the way I pointed to a tree, a path or a dog to practice my Siswati phrases. The children and sisters often laughed at my interesting but incorrect pronunciation and eagerly corrected me. We sat and talked while we waited in the line for water. Sometimes I just listened. Sometimes I used my few broken Siswati phrases. Sometimes my "sisters" Mavis or Nomthandazo and I talked in English about cultural social attitudes.

Finally our turn came for water. Everyone carried her own container. Even young girls carried 25 liters of water on their heads. And then there was my five-liter open bucket, which I had to support with at least one arm.

Fortunate: *The author (left) with her Swazi parents*

Each morning I sat outside my hut on a grass mat and studied Siswati. I often resorted to pictures and identified objects, or to phrase drills, compromising my lesson plans to adapt to the abilities of my language helper. I often saw the humor I was providing the situation. My family helped me with vocabulary and intonation.

Rice, chicken and sauce: My family's care for me shone through when I became sick after the first two weeks. My mother and sister came to eat with me in my hut, as I was too weak to join them in the kitchen around the fire as usual. Mother prepared the best meal—rice, chicken and sauce—and brought it to me.

My identity at work was twofold. To the rural health motivators, staff and those from my area, I was Nonhlanhla Magagula. The staff also knew my English name and met my blood parents. This gave me my Canadian identity. At church, people used either name.

My trust of my Swazi family proved valuable. As a nurse I needed to understand life on the homestead, especially in relation to nutrition, water, sanitation, language, workload, distances, ways of showing respect.

My Swazi mother taught me the Swazi way of hospitality. I saw this as I did home visits. Even when I taught relatively poor homesteads ("poor" in terms of food and money) I was often given whatever they had as a way of showing thanks: a small bag of peanuts or a pumpkin.

As winter approached, my Swazi sister and friend moved in with me. This gave me "family" at my workplace. It also made it culturally acceptable for my Swazi co-workers and neighbors to stop by and visit. We discussed cooking, baking and knitting.

Family gives us our identity. Christians are children of God and thus family, wherever they may live.

JoAnn Wiens is a member of Elim Mennonite Church, Grunthal, Man.

How a young man gained freedom from bitterness toward his abusive father through forgiveness

To cut the ropes that bind

Anonymous

The boy, 16, stood before his father, who was seated in the big living room chair. "Are you ready to take me to the police station?" the boy asked. It was the long-awaited day, the day he was to get his driver's license, the last day he could take his test before his learner's permit expired. He had completed driver's education, and his father had spent hours helping him practice driving. The boy was ready.

The father, after a silence, without lifting his eyes from the papers he held, asked, "Are you sure you want to go?"

"Yes," came the boy's quiet answer. The father shuffled papers. The father did not look up. The father said nothing. And the boy stood before his father—helpless, powerless, silent.

For 45 minutes.

For 45 minutes the boy waited for a response, for an answer to his question. But no answer came.

As I witnessed that scene, I relived some of the anguish of the most painful relationship I'd ever had, my relationship with my father. Years before I was old enough to go to college, I had begun counting the days. Not that I was especially excited about college; rather, I longed to leave home, to escape my father.

I longed to escape my father's temper. He often raised his voice in anger against me and the other children. I remember watching him, as he shouted at my mother, swept the top of the piano clean with his arm and threw a vase across the living room. After such incidents I never heard him apologize. He just went on as though he'd done nothing wrong.

I longed to escape my father's insensitivity. During high school, when the conversation turned to boy and girl, my father would answer either with teasing or with stony silence. Though I would have liked to date in high school, I didn't, because I never dared to ask him for the car.

I longed to escape my father's unfairness. When he couldn't hear me, he said I wasn't speaking up. When I couldn't hear him, he said I wasn't listening. When he lost something, he said, "What did you do with it?" I never heard my father say, "I was wrong."

I never rebelled outwardly against my father, but I argued with him often, and inwardly I seethed. If only I could endure—five more years ... 4 1/2 ... four years ... 3 1/2. I counted the days.

At long last the day came, and I left home. Once gone, I had little use for going back. I found summer jobs at college. Most holidays I had "to do something at school." When I did go home, I argued with my father.

Then during my sophomore year, a horrible thought surfaced: "You are bitter toward your father."

"No," I protested. "I can't be." For being bitter, I believed, was inconsistent with being a Christian. Confident of my goodness, I buried the bothersome thought.

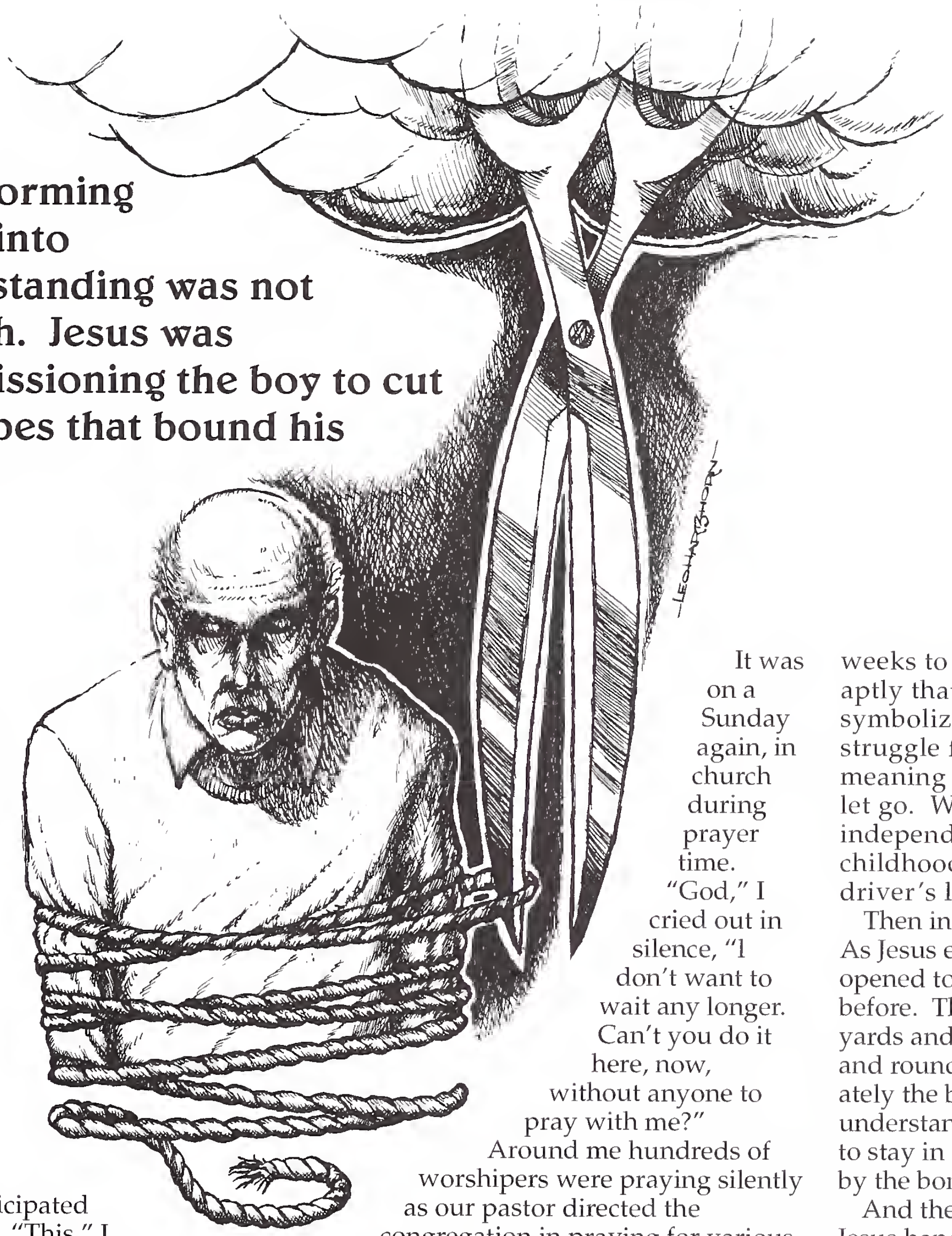
Nine months later the accusation gripped my conscience so strongly that, try as I might, I couldn't shake it. "Yes," I had to admit, "I am bitter." How that could be while I loved God and was committed to obeying God, I didn't know, for my theology left no room for being bitter and loving God at the same time.

One Sunday morning in church during prayer time, a sudden urge came over me: "I want to forgive my father." For months I had known that I *ought* to forgive him, but not until that moment had I *wanted* to. This desire was no act of spiritual heroism; it was an unsought gift. I forgave then and received God's forgiveness for my bitterness.

A while later I went home for a few days. Only after returning to school did I realize that during that visit something remarkable had happened. I had gone the whole weekend without once arguing. It was a first. Not the result of discipline or self-restraint but the fruit of forgiveness. My need to pound my fists against my father's authority was gone.

During my senior year of college I read a book that told of a boy who grew up bitter toward his father, then went away to school. Sarcastic,

Transforming anger into understanding was not enough. Jesus was commissioning the boy to cut the ropes that bound his father.



cynical, rebellious, he reminded me of me. Knowing this author's stories each climaxed with a keen spiritual insight that unlocked the whole book, I eagerly anticipated the ending. "This," I thought, "will show me where these attitudes come from and what to do about them."

I came to the story's end and found ... disappointment. For the "great spiritual principle" at the end of the book was merely forgiveness, and I had already forgiven. Two years before, I had forgiven my father. The book had raised false hopes.

But in the coming days an inner voice whispered, "You as an adult have forgiven your father, but what of the child within you? The child who suffered the hurt?"

Then I knew that the book had spoken the truth after all. I had heard of people who knew how to minister to the wounded child within, and I wanted desperately to find such a person to help me, to pray with me. But where was I to turn?

It was on a Sunday again, in church during prayer time. "God," I cried out in silence, "I don't want to wait any longer. Can't you do it here, now, without anyone to pray with me?"

Around me hundreds of worshipers were praying silently as our pastor directed the congregation in praying for various concerns, but I no longer heard his words, and I was oblivious to all those around me. I was alone with God.

"Bring to my mind, God, whatever memory you want to use to bring healing," I begged. Immediately there came to mind a scene long-forgotten.

The boy, 16, stood before his father seated in the big living room chair. "Are you ready to take me to the police station?" the boy asked.

The father, after a silence, without lifting his eyes, asked, "Are you sure you want to go?"

"Yes," came the boy's quiet answer. And then the boy stood before his father—helpless, powerless, silent. For 45 minutes.

In church that morning as an adult of 21, I witnessed that boy of 16, that inner child in search of healing, reliving that experience. Only in weeks to come would I realize how aptly that scene from my teen years symbolized my long, drawn-out struggle for freedom with a well-meaning father who found it hard to let go. What more fitting symbol of independence, of graduation from childhood to adulthood, than the driver's license?

Then into that scene I invited Jesus. As Jesus entered, the boy's eyes were opened to something he had not seen before. The father was bound by yards and yards of rope wound round and round him and the chair. Immediately the boy's anger melted into understanding. His dad didn't choose to stay in the chair; he was held there by the bondage of his own past.

And then an even greater surprise. Jesus handed the boy a pair of giant scissors. Transforming anger into understanding was not enough. Jesus was commissioning the boy to cut the ropes that bound his father.

In the days following that prayer, I kept surprising myself. Not only my feelings toward my father but my response to authority in all its forms had changed. I was less sarcastic, less cynical. The world no longer seemed such a hostile place.

As I accepted the scissors from Jesus' hand, somehow the bonds of bitterness in my life finally broke. The pain, not only of the adult but also of the inner child, was gone. I had been set free.

And in years to come I would have the privilege of watching my father's bonds, one strand at a time, begin to fall away. Sometimes with the help of a pair of giant scissors.

Letters

Godless monster

Since our politicians imply that we have to fight recurrent wars to keep our freedom and democracy, one is forced to assume that we have become the slaves of the recurrent wars we have to fight to keep our freedom and democracy. And being enslaved by recurrent war, we are truly enslaved by a horrible, destructive and godless monster that could enslave and destroy humanity. *Vernon Stucky, Hesston, Kan.*

Strengthen peace effort

When a number of us learned that the Commission on Home Ministries had decided to discontinue the employment of Robert Hull as secretary for peace and justice, we couldn't believe it. But apparently it is true. The reason we were given was, not enough budget. According to the conference *Handbook of Information*, Robert was already listed as "part time." Are we to believe that the peace principle of our belief and tradition is expendable? Certainly Robert has proven to be an effective worker in promoting peace and justice; not only does he hold to the peace principle, but he arrived at that position over a period of years, and from a previous solid military position, once he became convinced that he needed to change. And he did. We believe he served well.

For centuries our people have believed in peace and nonviolence and were driven "from pillar to post" and heavily persecuted for their beliefs. I cannot believe that we should diminish our peace emphasis at a time when many others are seeking alternatives to the carnage of war. Why not challenge our people to redouble efforts and strengthen our peace efforts? *Erwin C. Goering, Moundridge, Kan.*

Lois Barrett responds: In response to the letters of Leann Toews (May 24 issue) and Erwin C. Goering (above), I want to emphasize that the Commission on Home Ministries will be continuing to work in peace and justice ministries. The article on the CHM meetings (April 12 issue) noted both that Robert Hull's position was being cut at the end of this fiscal year *and* that peace and justice tasks were being reassigned to other staff.

As the article mentioned, CHM is restructuring its staff so that congregational needs can be met better and so that we can manage another round of budget cuts without simply cutting out one whole area of work. It is true that we will no longer have a peace and justice department. But neither will we have an evangelism and church development department or a Hispanic ministries department. Instead we will divide staff time into three main work areas in line with our overall mission of expanding the witness of God's people: (1) resourcing congregations for witness, (2) enabling witness beyond the local congregation and (3) channeling personnel for witness. The team that resources congregations for witness will have as part of its task providing congregations with resources for peace witness. This was one of the highest priorities for the commission at its March meeting. The second team will relate to peace and justice work on the national and binational levels, including our current relationships to Christian Peacemaker Teams, New Call to Peacemaking, the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund and Conscience Canada. I expect even more coordination with the peace and justice work currently being done by Mennonite Voluntary Service workers.

Current staff will take on many of the tasks; a few may be assigned to volunteers. In effect, other areas of CHM work will also be cut back

From our mission workers

Haiti—As I sit here in Jeremie listening to the wind off the Atlantic and the dogs barking, I know that most people here are sleeping. Haitians go to bed early and rise with the sun. There are good reasons for this. Jeremie has no electricity, the only flashlight batteries available are no good, and candles are not bright enough for most jobs. But here I am contemplating and writing by one little candle. As soon as I strike the match to light the candle I am no longer in darkness. That is, if the flame catches. The matches available here are not top quality. But I always try another one and have always succeeded in getting a light.

Many times I feel small and insignificant, like my little candle. Then I remember that Jesus is not asking me to be in competition with electric lights. He only expects me to shine with what I have. When the military brandish guns and I have not the language skills to persuade them to drop them, I can smile at them, look them in the eye and pray that my friendliness will touch a tender spot. A little light dispels a lot of darkness. *Lena Siegers, serving a three-year term with Christian Peacemaker Corps, a part of Christian Peacemaker Teams, which is supported by the General Conference Mennonite Church*

Burkina Faso—There is so much dust flying around and everything is so dry that it is hard not to get sick. The Burkinabé usually refer to February as the death month. Last year someone died in our neighborhood almost every day. This year there were only about 10 deaths. One of the deaths was a teacher who had AIDS; another was from cerebral malaria. Most of the time it isn't really known what people die from. Our worker's brother died and was buried before noon, which is strange. The cause of death is unknown. Although this son had been disowned by the family (he was living in Bobo), after his death the family here in Orodara gave him a respectful funeral.

Funerals are a big show here. People come from miles around to greet and sit and eat. It is expected that you give money to the family of the deceased. Some of this money is used for food and some for divining to find out what the person really died from and/or for a Muslim sacrifice.

Gerald went to greet the family before the majority of the people had arrived and they suggested he come again later because there was no one to see his concern, and it would be more appropriate if many people saw him show his respect. *Gerald and Bev Neufeld* because of the reassignment of peace and justice work.

The peace position was important in my decision to become a Mennonite. I continue to be committed to Jesus' way of peace and will do everything in my power to continue that commitment through CHM programming. *Lois Barrett, CHM executive secretary*

Story inaccurate

The news story (May 10 issue, page 13) regarding health-care reform advocacy by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. and Mennonite Mutual Aid contained inaccuracies that mislead the reader.

MCC U.S. has not "testified before Congress that it favors a single-payer health plan, similar to the Canadian system." MCC U.S. participates in a broad, faith-based coalition that has endorsed principles such as universal coverage. This coalition evaluates legislation in light of these principles and urges congressional members to support legislation that best meets its principles. It has judged the American Health Security Act ("single-payer") superior to other legislation but has not endorsed it.

The MCC U.S. witness for universal coverage is shaped by Christ's teaching in Matthew 25. Sometimes we can respond personally to those in need. Other times unjust social situations create problems for people at such massive levels that we ask government for assistance. This conviction that suffering people should not be denied care is also found in the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church resolutions on health care. Both resolutions call for a national health-care system that provides preventive, curative, supportive and emergency services to everyone, everywhere in the United States.

The news story also did not note the extent of ongoing dialogue between MMA and MCC U.S. While we have not reached consensus over whether MMA's strategy to obtain an exemption from regional health alliances is consistent with pursuing universal coverage, MCC U.S. and MMA are working cooperatively to inform Mennonites of the critical importance of universal coverage. A letter, drafted jointly by MCC U.S. and MMA, will soon be sent to churches urging Mennonites to contact their legislators in support of universal coverage. *Lynette Meck, executive secretary, MCC U.S.*

Fiscal health

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J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Do the right thing

It's not right to give money to street musicians, is it?

J.B. Miller

As I traveled the other day through a subway station in Chicago, a group of five young men was beating out rhythms on a variety of drums. It was obvious they had been there awhile; most of the equipment was much too heavy to be considered mobile, and a small pile of coins and bills was in a box at their feet, no doubt contributions from prior travelers.

The scene was not unlike other subway stops in the city—people setting up impromptu activities, hoping for a generous commuter to drop a quarter or two, or better yet a dollar, in the box on the floor. About 30 people soon gathered, waiting for the train. Some moved in close to watch and listen, while others stood away as if to avoid the noise, but that was impossible in the small underground area. The rhythms bounced off the walls, offending my more "culturally attuned" ears.

I knew I shouldn't give them money. It would only encourage them. They should get a job, a real job, one that pays minimum wage and has no benefits.

Business suits: It was a mixed crowd: a young teenage woman carrying a baby, men and women in business suits, tourists on their way to the shops on Michigan Avenue, an elderly man who looked like he hadn't had a bath in weeks and students on their way home from school. No doubt you've seen them, people mirroring the diversity of a major city.

The drumbeat continued. I tried to move away, yet I was drawn to the quintet of drummers. The smiles on their faces and the banter with the crowd all made for entertainment in an otherwise boring day. But I knew that if I appeared too interested I might need to add my contribution to the small amount of money that lay at their feet. Why didn't the train come so I could get away? Anyway, I knew I shouldn't give them money. It would only encourage them. They should get a job, a real job, one that pays minimum wage and has no benefits. Drumming in the subway was annoying me, even if they enjoyed it.

Finally the rumble of the train drowned out their rhythms, and as the train pulled into the station only two people pushed through the crowd to add to the cash: the young mother with her baby and the old man who needed a bath. From somewhere coins appeared. With smiles on their faces and words of encouragement to the drummers, they each placed a quarter in the box. Ah, but we business types knew better. We give to our church, or at least the United Way. We've been warned about giving money to people in the streets.

As the train pulled out of the station with the passengers on board, the smiling drummers continued their drumming in the empty station. The young mother playfully nuzzled her cooing baby, a tourist touched his pocket to make sure his wallet was still there. We business types scowled at the foolishness, knowing we had done the right thing.

Away home

Parents on trial

Effort is not enough. We depend on God's grace.

Sara Wenger Shenk

Sara Wenger Shenk is author of Coming Home *(Good Books, 1992) and lives in Harrisonburg, Va.*

Praised are the parents whose baby walks first, talks first, sleeps all night first, and elicits rave reviews, "Oh, isn't she adorable? Her parents must be doing something right."

Pitied are the parents whose baby lags behind his precocious neighbor, screams for inexplicable reasons, sports a slightly misshapen ear and sucks his thumb incessantly. Such a child evokes whispered mutterings, "I wonder what his problem is. I wonder what they're doing wrong."

Praised are the parents whose well-behaved child wins hearts easily, does fine schoolwork and is welcomed into her friends' homes. Praised are the parents whose children spout big vocabularies, throw the ball well and show signs of early maturity.

Pitied are the parents whose aggressive child can't sit still for long, irritates neighbors and alienates potential playmates. Pitied are the parents whose shy child finds the hurly-burly of the classroom too overbearing and withdraws into her own world.

When I became a parent 15 years ago I was abruptly ushered into an arena of intense scrutiny. My peers, my parents, my siblings and my church began to analyze my success or failure with a whole new set of criteria.

Birthing a child sensitized me to a new dimension of my fragile existence. Children are infinitely complex, perpetually unpredictable. I can't guarantee that even my best efforts will produce anything resembling what I hope they will become. I may do a commendable job, but the outcome is not under my control.

I remember the day our 5-year-old son began kindergarten at a big, new school. He asked several anxiety-laden questions over the breakfast table, but when he walked out the door with his brand new lunchbox in hand, he was singing. By the time we approached the classroom his cheerful melodies had turned to a mournful lament. No matter what I said or did, the tears would not end.

I came home and cried, too. Doubts and misgivings nagged. Would he learn to love learning or to despise school? Might there be a bully who would ridicule his first-day jitters? Would the teacher understand and love little people? We had done what we could to choose a wholesome environment, but the factors now shaping our son's understanding of himself and the world had increased dramatically overnight.

When our son arrived home after his first day at school and reported nonchalantly, "I'm the best listener and the best rememberer, and I like myself," I was taken aback. I hoped he wasn't parading his supposed superiority. But what more reassuring comment could a parent hope for after a disturbingly teary morning. I considered his words a gift of grace, a gift of reassurance that one more hurdle had been passed on the way to maturity.

Parents struggling with guilt and failure aren't helped when pitied or patronized with simplistic formulas for success.

Feet of clay: Ten years later, I'm still an uncertain parent. Many of us bungle our way into parenthood only to discover that we are ill-prepared and only half-grown-up ourselves. We had faulted our parents for lacking perfection, only to discover on becoming parents how much our feet of clay resemble theirs. Admittedly, some of us are more skilled at parenting than others. There are certain techniques, styles and attitudes that make it more likely that parents can give positive nurture and maintain a close friendship with their growing children. Yet the barbs we throw at struggling parents smack of a peculiar prejudice.

The bottom line is that we are all struggling parents. By becoming parents, all of us entered a new realm of vulnerability. We opened ourselves to certain pain and likely failure. Yet in so doing we also opened ourselves to the possibility of experiencing a new dimension of God's grace.

All will likely not turn out as we hope for our children. We do well to acknowledge our capacity to err rather than to live nervously under the illusion that there is a foolproof formula for producing perfect progeny. There isn't. Christ's strength is made perfect in our weakness. Christ can redeem even when "perfect" techniques fail.

Parents struggling with guilt and failure aren't helped when pitied or patronized with simplistic formulas for success. Parents who have cared for their children, no matter how flawed in their technique, don't deserve to be impaled on the sword of other folks' self-righteous judgments. They need the friendship of those humble enough to know their own capacity for failure.

Parents are like artists. In *Walking on Water* Madeleine L'Engle writes, "In a real sense not one of us is qualified, but it seems that God continually chooses the most unqualified to do his work, to bear his glory. If we are qualified, we tend to think that we have done the job ourselves. If we are forced to accept our evident lack of qualification, then there's no danger that we will confuse God's work with our own, or God's glory with our own."

Parents may recognize their own distinctive brush strokes of color on the canvas, but so many subtle tones have been added by other artists that the composite of color and line is sometimes alarming, sometimes mysterious, sometimes beautiful.

The final harmonizing of the many different brush strokes ultimately belongs to a master artist. If and when our children grow to resemble even remotely what we hoped and prayed they would become, their beauty is a miracle of grace—the gift of the Master Artist.

News

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Youth material publishing partner pulls out

Des Plaines, Ill. (GCMC/MC/COB)—The largest publishing partner of Anabaptist youth material has decided to bail out, citing financial losses.

At a May 17-18 meeting of the youth section of the Anabaptist Curriculum Publishing Council here, Mennonite Publishing House (MPH), Scottdale, Pa., representing the Mennonite Church, announced that it will no longer cooperatively publish the following material: *With*, *YouthGuide* and two youth curricula—*Youth Bible Studies* and *Youth Electives*.

The two smaller publishing partners —Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan. (General Conference Mennonite Church), and Brethren Press, Elgin, Ill. (Church of the Brethren), will continue to publish *With* and *YouthGuide* and will start a new youth curriculum in fall 1995. MPH also announced plans to publish its own youth curriculum and to be a cooperative user of *With* and *YouthGuide*.

Tight budget: MPH representatives explained that decisions are now being made on the basis of whether they reduce debt. MPH lost $111,710 on the cooperative youth material in the last fiscal year; $48,194, or 43 percent of the loss, was due to overhead, including inventory write-offs and interest applied to to its debt.

Publisher J. Robert Ramer shared how difficult it has been for MPH to pay for the bulk—about 60 percent—of the bills for the cooperative youth material. The amount each publishing house paid was determined by sales.

Faith & Life Press and Brethren Press also lost money on the cooperative youth products. "Even though Faith & Life Press lost $29,378 in the most recent fiscal year, we are willing to take some loss in youth products because it is a part of our mission," said publisher Norma Johnson. "Currently we cover our losses with profits from other materials. However, we will be looking for new ways to cut our losses in the future."

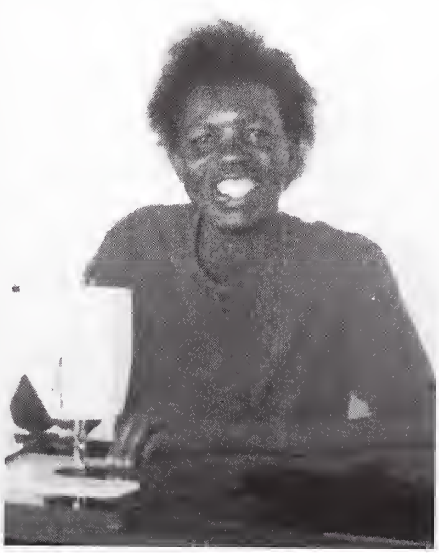
Mennonite Publishing House and Faith & Life Press have published *With* together since the youth magazine started in 1968. The two publishers initiated *YouthGuide*, a resource for

Mission meets development in Botswana

Mmadinare, Botswana—Erica Thiessen taught Catherine Motshwetla to sew.

Motshwetla had been working 16-hour days for low wages in a shop to support her children as a single mother. Thiessen, a Mennonite missionary, helped her purchase fabric, and now Motshwetla has a livelihood selling the dresses and school uniforms she sews on the treadle sewing machine. She also now has time to make many visits, both pastoral and evangelistic.

"On one level Erica's work with Motshwetla is 'community development,'" reports Commission on Overseas Mission staffer Peter Rempel. "But Erica is convinced that it is a spiritual struggle against forces that enslave and oppress. These spiritual forces manifest themselves in tangible obstacles to Motshwetla gaining a livelihood that would permit her to be with her children and also carry out her ministry as evangelist and pastor."



Erica Thiessen

Inside the news

Haiti, health care top MCC U.S. agenda / p. 14

In Argentina churches report renewal / p. 15

MMA tracks changing church / p. 16

Haitian in Africa finds commonalities / p. 17

Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute graduated 10 students April 24 at Zion Church in Swift Current.

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Mennonite Central Committee has opted to send an additional $20,000 U.S./$27,000 Cdn. in aid to hungry people in central Bosnia via a partner agency in Croatia, Duhovna Stvarnost. In April, Ivan Vacek, relief director of Duhovna Stvarnost, led a convoy into parts of Bosnia previously closed. He reported that people in central Bosnia are desperately hungry and that children have not been to school for two years. MCC also hopes to place a peace consultant in Zagreb, Croatia. Since last October, German Mennonites have sent 31 truckloads of food and supplies to southeast Croatia and have trucked food purchased by MCC to Belgrade, Serbia. MCC Europe secretary Hansulrich Gerber hopes for a loosening of sanctions against Serbia proper. He fears the pressure of sanctions will push Serbia toward alliance with the Bosnian Serbs. "The world needs to do whatever it can to isolate Bosnian Serbs. As long as the world puts Bosnian Serbs and Serbian Serbs into the same basket, they will be friends—they will have no other choice," Gerber says.

A Christian Peacemaker Team sent to the West Bank and Gaza Strip spent Pentecost Saturday planting a one-eighth-acre plot of tomatoes and hand harvesting a field of wheat. The fields, belonging to a Christian family, have been under attack by both a small community of radical Muslims and Jewish settlers. The team of three women and six men includes a 70-year-old retired teacher and a 23-year-old college graduate.

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Three Mennonite periodicals received awards at the annual convention of the Evangelical Press Association, held May 9-11 in Costa Mesa, Calif. *The Mennonite* received first place in poetry for Larry Penner's poem "Fencing" (May 25, 1993, issue). *The Marketplace* received an Award of Merit as first runner-up in the awards of excellence division for general magazine. *Mennonite Brethren Herald* took third place in poetry for Elaine Pinto's poem "Obedience" and fifth place in the standing column category for "Terror in God's Name" by John H. Redekop.

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O. Ray Wiebe and Rosella Reimer Duerksen received alumni awards from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., May 21. Wiebe received the Distinguished Acheievement Award. He served as vice president of CF Industries in Chicago from 1962-1972 and served as president of the Western Farmers Association from 1972 until retirement in 1982. Since retirement, Wiebe has participated in 13 foreign agricultural cooperative project assignments for Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance. Duerksen received the Outstanding Alumna Award. She taught music at Bethel from 1950-52 and from 1955-56. She has directed music for numerous churches and is currently music director of the Arkansas Chamber Singers. She founded the Arkansas Presbyterian Statewide Children's Choir Festival last year.

youth workers, in 1989.

They also have a long history of working together on youth curriculum; their first joint project was in 1974. Brethren Press joined Mennonite Publishing House and Faith & Life Press to produce youth curriculum beginning in 1980. The Evangel Press (Brethren in Christ), which supported 5.7 percent of the curriculum costs, also pulled out in February.

The cooperative youth curriculum will end in summer 1995 and will result in the elimination of a part-time editorial staff position for the Anabaptist Curriculum Publishing Council. Negotiations are still under way about the date that Mennonite Publishing House will end its financial support for *With* and *YouthGuide*.

While members of the Anabaptist Curriculum Publishing Council understood the rationale behind MPH's decision, several expressed concern about the way the situation was handled.

"I don't have a problem with your needing to take certain steps because of financial resources; we wouldn't expect you to do something that was financially unwise," said Wendy McFadden, director of Brethren Press.

Unfortunate process: However, she noted that it was unfortunate that some council members first learned about the possibility of MPH withdrawing from cooperative publishing in an article in a February issue of *Gospel Herald*.

"... We set up a process last fall that provided for discussion at this meeting and a decision in a year. Then we read in your press that you were pulling out of the cooperative and reshaping youth materials—youth materials that you don't own by yourself. You didn't bring a proposal here; you brought a decision," said McFadden.

The minutes from the November 1993 publishing council meeting stated that "each house should evaluate its own situation ... and bring one or two ideas for what we could do if we make a change [to the May meeting]. ... We do not anticipate that the spring discussion will generate a final decision."

"The handwriting was on the wall," said Levi Miller, director of congregational literature, noting that the other partners knew at the November meeting MPH would need to make changes. In addition he noted that a letter was sent to Faith & Life Press in January. The letter said that "we cannot continue to be involved in producing ... youth products under the current arrangements" and listed several options.

There was no written contract among the three publishers about the length of commitment to cooperative youth publishing. "Our work was all based on trust," said Johnson, noting that future cooperative publishing arrangements will likely be spelled out in greater detail.

"Many times I have come away from these meetings really energized by cooperative work. I have been absolutely convinced that we are getting something done together that none of us could get done individually," said Johnson. "It is sad to realize that we are ending our cooperative publishing for youth."

> **"It is sad to realize that we are ending our cooperative publishing for youth."**
>
> ***Johnson***

"This decision has been a while in coming. We see it as an opportunity to be more fiscally accountable to the projects we publish," said Miller. "We look forward to continuing to serve youth in appropriate ways." *Carla Reimer*

Haiti, health care top MCC U.S. executive agenda

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—From Haiti to health care, the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office took prominence at the MCC U.S. executive committee meetings May 5-6.

At the urging of MCC staff, the executive committee approved a short-term position for the Washington Office to work on Haiti concerns. Staff will work on funding.

Accountability: But the Washington Office, as an MCC U.S. program dealing with international issues, raised questions for the committee about accountability. On such issues, does the office relate to the MCC U.S. board, which is responsible for domestic programs, or the MCC board, which is responsible for overseas programs?

"When it is a U.S. government issue, this board should be consulted first," said MCC U.S. executive committee member Don Steelberg. "That should include Haiti."

MCC U.S. staff were asked to work on the issue of accountability and responsibility and report back in September.

Health care: The committee also spent considerable time discussing the differences in approaches to health-care reform by MCC U.S. and Mennonite Mutual Aid. MMA has not supported any plan but has campaigned for a provision allowing religious organizations to be exempt from health-care alliances.

MCC U.S. supports certain principles—such as access to health care, financial limitations, prevention of illness and controlling costs—that it believes are best achieved in the single-payer plan. The Washington Office is a member of the Interreligious Health Care Access Campaign, which has rated the single-payer American Health Security Act (AHSA) the best proposal for universal coverage.

These differences have resulted in tension between MCC U.S. and Mennonite Mutual Aid. In response, both organizations have issued a joint statement "calling for the adoption of universal coverage as part of national health-care reform in the United States."

Still, board members expressed concern that MMA's pursuit of an exemption from the alliance system might be incompatible with the pursuit of universal coverage.

Meanwhile, committee member Wilma Bailey questioned MCC U.S. for not officially endorsing the American Health Security Act. "How can we work for this particular issue without supporting this particular act?" she asked.

Karl Shelly of the Washington Office said particular legislation isn't "the only route to success." "Is the goal the passing of H.R. 1200 [American Health Security Act], or is our goal universal coverage?" he said. "I'm tempted to say it's the latter."

In other health-care related action, the executive committee voted to transfer funding of the advocacy responsibilities of Mennonite Health Services to MMA. MHS is a former MCC U.S. program, and its advocacy work still receives MCC U.S. funding. MHS advocacy includes support programs for people with mental illness and developmental disabilities.

The reason for transferring the advocacy work came out of a March meeting of six Mennonite health organizations to try to improve efficiency.

But the committee's decision came after much discussion. Alonna Gautsche Sprunger, director of MHS advocacy programs, said there is concern how MMA can be an advocate for people with mental illness while routinely excluding them from coverage.

The committee made continued funding of advocacy work under MMA contingent on annual review.

In other business:

- For 1995, the committee voted to fund an expanded Summer Service program for people of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, continue to staff racism awareness work and help fund a proposed MCC magazine.
- The committee passed a statement on lifting sanctions against South Africa. "We urge that new investment in the region should be targeted to promote greater social and economic justice and concern for the environment," the statement read.
- Controller Ken Langeman reported U.S. contributions through the end of April are down 5 percent from last year. The budget called for an 8 percent increase. He predicted a shortfall of $500,000 to $750,000 for the fiscal year. *Rich Preheim*

In Argentina churches report renewal

Argentina (Meetinghouse)—Imagine an individual church that has grown to 150,000 members in just eight years. Imagine a maximum security prison where one-third of the inmates gather almost daily to worship.

The revival in Argentina goes back at least 22 years, when pastor Omar Cabrerra held a crusade in Santa Fe. He began the crusade with a 45-day fast. The crusade continued for 550 nights, and churches mushroomed.

Prison: One of the most amazing stories surrounds Olmos Prison. This maximum security prison was former-

Beginning next year World Fellowship Day for Mennonites and Brethren in Christ will move from Pentecost Sunday to the fourth Sunday in January. The action passed the General Council of Mennonite World Conference last July in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The council believes a consistent calendar date will gain more universal usage.

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Ontario Mennonites and Brethren in Christ who have served in southern Africa are invited to a reunion Aug. 4-7 in Waterloo, Ont. Contact Bruno Baerg at Mennonite Central Committee Ontario, 50 Kent Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1, (519) 745-8458.

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Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary honored 24 students at the school's commencement service May 20. Fourteen students received the Master of Divinity degree, six the Master of Arts in Theological Studies, two the Master of Arts in Peace Studies and two the Certificate in Theological Studies.

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Mennonite agencies are honoring seminary graduates in hope of fostering long-term relationships. Five agencies—the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Mennonite Board of Education, Mennonite Board of Missions and the Mennonite Church General Board—sponsored two banquets including entertainment and special gifts for graduates. "The church agencies look to having the graduates understand their ministry as an extension of the congregational mission," said Timothy Burkholder of Mennonite Board of Education. Banquets were held in Harrisonburg, Va., April 25 and in Elkhart, Ind., April 29.

A conference on women in theology will be held at Bluffton (Ohio) College June 23-25. "Mennonite Voices in Dialogue: Women Doing Theology" will bring together Mennonite and Brethren in Christ women and men to discuss forgiveness, atonement and a vision for Anabaptist feminism. For information contact Mennonite Central Committee Women's Concerns at (717) 859-3889.

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Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., graduated 134 students May 22. Seven seniors received Thresher Awards for exemplary achievements at a convocation May 9: Steve Waltner of Wichita, Kan., for mathematical sciences-computer science; Suzanne Marie Fransen, Normal, Ill., in English; Sylvia Ann Carson, Andover, Kan., in nursing; Suzanne Mathews-Janzen, North Newton, Kan., in theater arts; Joel Yoder, Elkhart, Ind., in history; Robin Kaufman, Marion, S.D., in music; and Tonya Ramer, North Lawrence, Ohio, in Bible and religion.

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The New Call to Peacemaking national steering committee endorsed three new projects at its meeting April 29-30 in Elgin, Ill. The committee acted to encourage churches to form "heart groups" of two to five people that would meet once a month for 15 minutes before or after worship to share a time of meditation and prayer. The committee also assigned Robert Hull, secretary for peace and justice for the General Conference Mennonite Church, to design a study process for 1995 on the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. The group also decided to plan a consultation of Mennonites, Friends and Brethren to address the problems of family violence and militarism. The dates of the consultation were set for Aug. 1-7, 1995.

Growth of the Argentinian Mennonite church

Pehuajo, Argentina (Meetinghouse)—For Lester Hershey, it was an occasion to see what God had accomplished through Mennonite mission in Argentina.

The occasion was the 75th anniversary celebrations of the "Iglesia Evangelical Menonita Argentina," IEMA (Argentinian Evangelical Mennonite Church), held here Feb. 23-27.

Lester Hershey was 5 when he first arrived in Argentina. It was 1917. His parents were the first commissioned Mennonite missionaries to Argentina.

The building they built in 1923 in Pehuajo, a small town 250 miles (400 km.) southwest of Buenos Aires, seats 100. It is still adequate for the small Pehuajo church. But the IEMA now numbers 2,400 members in 34 churches.

After a growth in missionary influence the Mennonite North American mission force is now down to one couple, Delbert and Frieda Erb. For the past 25 years, all presidents of the IEMA have been native Argentinians.

The character of the worship has also changed. Spanish music and charismatic expression pervaded the convention.

"We have a mixture in our churches of charismatic and traditional," said Raul Garcia, president of Mennonite World Conference. "We went through a difficult period ... but we have remained united in spite of our differences." He says debates about worship styles are past.

The convention balanced charismatic and Anabaptist themes. On the opening night, with the church overflowing, the movie *The Radicals* was shown. On Saturday evening, renewal movement pastor Oscar Marcellino called people forward for healing, physical and inward, and on Thursday morning Delbert Erb preached a strong message on the Anabaptist heritage. *Ron Geddert*

ly the toughest in the country. However, the witness of a Christian prison guard, an incarcerated pastor and an evangelist started a revival.

Today one-third of the 3,000 prisoners are members of a prison church pastored by several inmates. All members fast at least twice weekly and take turns in all-night prayer vigils. Although one-third of the members are discharged every year, the church continues to grow.

Doubts: But not all agree that Argentina is in a great revival. Some Argentinians point to a low retention rate of converts from crusades, to the low proportion of the population that is evangelized, to the isolation of the various ministries, to the lack of social change.

Mario Snyder, pastor of a Mennonite congregation, says that when revival comes it has three characteristics: transformed lives, a social impact and a government that is shaken. "These things we don't see clearly here in Argentina."

Snyder himself has played a significant role in renewal and revival in the Mennonite church. A former missionary, Snyder has combined efforts with three other (non-Mennonite) pastors to bring the gospel to people in the west zone of Buenos Aires. Four churches have grown to nine churches with about 2,500 members. Snyder's church is the only one that is Mennonite.

The Evangelical Mennonite Conference of Argentina (EMCA) itself has been influenced by Snyder as well as by the renewal and revival movement. Although there was a difficult period in which the renewal-oriented people such as Snyder were divided from the more traditional Mennonite members, there is now mutual acceptance. *Ron Geddert*

MMA tracks changing church

Goshen, Ind. (MMA)—The Mennonite Mutual Aid Board of Directors struggled with the future needs of the church at meetings here May 5-6.

Keith Stucky, Brownstown, Pa., said he grew up with a Mennonite identity that went beyond his local congregation. It included conferences and denominations. "I do not see the strength of that identity in my children's generation," he said. "They see themselves as Christian and Mennonite in their local congregation but not at a broader denominational level."

Nick Rempel, Buhler, Kan., noted that people who had the vision for MMA gave birth to the organization. Those who have inherited MMA may not sense the same ownership. "It may mean they will want to reshape it to gain ownership," he said.

Board members agreed that an important part of the future of MMA will be connecting with congregations. Henry Landes, Sellersville, Pa., said, "We need to think more about marrying the services we provide with the missions of local congregations."

Specific needs board members suggested MMA might help with included affordable housing, care for the elderly (particularly home care), and care for the chronically mentally ill.

Health-care reform: In other business, the board reviewed MMA's work in health-care reform. Karl Sommers, vice president of corporate planning, reported on his contact with legislators. He said he is optimistic some reform legislation will pass this year and that MMA will have a role to play in a reformed system.

The board was updated on MMA's progress moving into managed care. MMA has targeted four areas for most of its efforts. They include central Kansas, northern Indiana, and Lancaster and Franconia in Pennsylvania.

Jerry Troyer, vice president of health operations, said MMA is moving to a system that chooses the best providers and contracts with them in advance to provide care for members at lower cost.

He said MMA management's vision for the medical system in the future is that it will become more integrated, especially in urban areas. In the next five to 10 years, MMA expects the financing and delivery of health care to become part of a single product. MMA is beginning to talk with Mennonite physicians about how to shape a new health-care delivery system. *Steve Bowers*

Haitian finds commonalities in Africa

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Jean Remy Azor recently enjoyed a five-month break from the volatile political situation that has disrupted life in Haiti.

Last December, Remy, coordinator of Mennonite Central Committee's agroforestry program in Desarmes, Haiti, traveled to the West African nation of Burkina Faso. His mission: to share his community organizing skills with MCC affiliates there.

"My first impression was that Burkina Faso is poorer than Haiti," he says. "Later I realized there is not much difference. ... But there is more hope in Burkina Faso."

Back in Haiti since late April, Remy found no improvement. He reports that social and economic situations have worsened. "But my faith in Jesus Christ chains me to my work. I still have strength to work since a Christian has to suffer because Christ suffered," Remy says. *Emily Will*

Building a future: *Jean Remy with his 3 1/2-year-old daughter, Janida.*

Emily Will (MCC)

Mennonite missionaries Gary and Jean Issac in Transkei, South Africa, saw their house firebombed twice, first March 29, then again April 14. On May 15 Zionist church leaders whom the Isaacs had told of the bombings came to pray at the house. "As the last of the group left our premises we felt relieved of the heaviness the bombings had left on us," writes Jean.

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Mennonite Mutual Aid's new Praxis Mutual Fund has received national attention since its introduction as a religiously based mutual fund with a strict set of ethical investment guidelines. Stories have appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Chicago Tribune* and other newspapers. "That was a pleasant surprise," said J. B. Miller, president of MMA Praxis, "but it shows the kind of interest there is for this kind of investment possibility. People are showing a growing interest in putting their money to work in ways that express their beliefs."

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The relationship between Mennonite self-identity and theology of mission was the focus of the annual conference mission leaders meetings held May 1-3 in Waterloo, Ont. Mission leaders from 17 conferences of the Mennonite Church and eight area conferences of the General Conference Mennonite Church met together at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, to discuss the tasks of evangelism and church planting. Speaking from his experience at Washington (D.C.) Community Fellowship, Myron Augsburger told attenders, "When congregational life touches the community, the church is able to provide resources needed in the community. We need to do more to show the relevance of the church by appealing to people on the basis of who they are, meeting them in the name of Jesus."

Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

The Wichita '95 seminar committee is asking for suggestions for seminar topics and possible seminar leaders. Suggestions, including offers to lead seminars, should be sent by July 25 to Vern Preheim, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Wichita '95, the joint conference of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church, will be held July 25-30, 1995, in Wichita, Kan.

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The Fair Tax Commission, a nine-member commission set up by the Ontario government, is recommending that church lands and buildings be subject to property tax. The tax would be phased in over five years and would be based on a specially designed scale rather than on actual market value. The commission also recommended removing tax exemptions for a long list of others who do not pay and recommended funding education solely by income tax. The government has not decided whether to accept the recommendations. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

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A group of Abraham and Sarah caravan volunteers helped Joy Mennonite Church of Oklahoma City with community outreach April 18-24. As part of their activities, they shingled a roof for a family. "We wanted people to understand what the Mennonite church in their community stands for and what we believe about salvation and Christian living," said pastor Moses Mast. "The loving work and the way the team related to people was a powerful proclamation." The caravans, initiated by the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church, stem from the General Conference's 1992 resolution to plant and support new churches. The next caravan was to take place at the Comunidad de Amor in Philadelphia June 1-10. Coordinators for the Abraham and Sarah caravans are Lester and Winifred Ewy, 3202 Royer West Drive, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-2965.

DEATHS

Hulda Guenther Heppner, Waldheim, Sask., died April 10 at age 58. She, with her husband, Oliver, worked with Mennonite Pioneer Mission at Cross Lake, Man., taught at Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute 1965-1982, and worked with Native Ministries in Manigotogan, Man., 1985-1991, and at Riverton, Matheson Island and Pine Dock, Man.

Forrest Musser, Reading, Mass., died Jan. 14 at age 89. He was pastor at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, 1941-1945.

MINISTERS

Bradlee Bame will be associate pastor for youth and Christian education at Maplewood Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., beginning July 1.

Palmer Becker is resigning June 30 as pastor of Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.

Claude Boyer is retiring from the pastorate at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio. Claude and his wife, Mary, will celebrate with the church June 26.

Donald Burleson is pastor of United Church, Peoria, Ill.

Tim Cooper will be pastor at Hyde Park Fellowship, Boise, Idaho, beginning Sept. 1.

Bryan Ens is pastoral intern at Cornerstone Church, Saskatoon.

Doug and **Sandy Epp** are serving as interim pastors at Eden Church, Chilliwack, B.C.

Kevin Farmwald is pastor at First Church, Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Walter Friesen will end his pastorate at Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., June 30.

Jake Froese is conference minister for the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta.

Ted Grimsrud is resigning from Eugene (Ore.) Church. He and his wife, Kathleen Temple, will be pastors at Salem Church, Freeman, S.D., beginning Sept. 1.

Erw Klassen will be summer assistant pastor at Olivet Church, Clearbrook, B.C., from June to August.

John Klassen is conference minister for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.

Val Krehbiel will be pastor at Faith Church, Montezuma, Kan., July 1.

Marianne Mellinger was ordained April 24 as pastor at Germantown Church in Philadelphia.

Jeff Minor is resigning June 30 as associate pastor at Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.

Abe Neufeld began in mid-March as half-time interim lead pastor at Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church.

Paul Rupp is associate pastor at United Mennonite Church, Peoria, Ill.

Harold Schilk, pastor at Nith Valley Church, New Hamburg, Ont., was ordained April 10.

Mark Stahl will become pastor at Pulaski (Iowa) Church in August.

Rick White is pastor at First Church, Huntingdon Valley, Pa.

Mark Wiens will be associate pastor at Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., beginning July 1.

WORKERS

Mae and **Morgan Baer**, Shantz Church, Baden, Ont., are beginning two-month MCC terms in Lithuania at Lithuanian Christian College.

Michael Eby-Good, Community Church, Lancaster, Pa., began a two-year MCC term December 1993 in

Mae Baer

Morgan Baer

Eby-Good

Engle

Kauffman

Kroeker

Akron, Pa., where he works as a graphic designer.

David Engle has been appointed academic dean and registrar for Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute.

Peter Fast is retiring after 28 years as professor of New Testament at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg. The school held a celebration in his honor May 14.

Sonja Friesen has been named director of youth and young adult ministries for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.

Wilbert E. Hieb, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., was recognized May 1 for 50 years of service to medicine by the Nebraska Medical Association.

Joyce Hostetler, Neil Avenue Church, Columbus, Ohio, was appointed to the Central District ministerial committee. She replaces **Melvin D. Schmidt**.

Susan Kauffman, Corvallis (Ore.) Fellowship and Seattle Church, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Prey Veng, Cambodia, where she will work as a community development promoter.

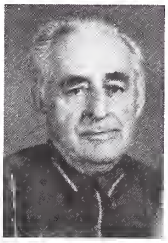
Irene Kroeker, Rockway Church, Kitchener, Ont., began a two-year MCC term July 1993 in Clearbrook, B.C., where she works as manager of Roots Plus.

Jeremy Linscheid, First Church, Reedley, Calif., began a two-year MCC term in March in Reedley, where he works as resource development coordinator.

Ken Loewen has been named executive director of Eden Health Care Services, Winkler, Man.

Betty Pries, Fort Garry Fellowship, Winnipeg, began a two-year MCC term July 1993 in Winnipeg, where she works as a case worker and office manager at Mediation Services.

Ann Raber retired May 31 after 10 years as wellness director for Mennonite Mutual Aid.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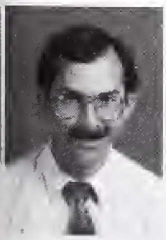
Linscheid

Pries

Rose

Sidney and **Viola Ramer**, Zurich (Ont.) Church, are beginning two-month MCC terms in Lithuania. Sidney will serve as a construction worker at Lithuanian Christian College.

Carol Rose, Seattle Church, began a two-year MCC term in March in Lancaster, Pa., where she works as day-care program director at Mom's House.

Lorna Beth Shantz, Akron (Pa.) Church, began a two-year MCC term in March in Akron, where she works as records assistant.

Arlene and **Ted Walter**, South Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church, are beginning two-year MCC terms in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. They will be working as hosts at the MCC guest house.

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Amoco has decided to pull out of Burma, calling its operations there a "public relations nightmare," reports *Synapses Messages*. A human rights delegation of Nobel laureates has called for the strongest possible economic sanctions against the Burmese military junta's State Law and Order Restoration Council for its atrocious human rights record. Other U.S. companies, including Texaco, Unocal and Pepsi, remain active in Burma.

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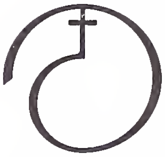

Randy Horst, Goshen, Ind., graphic designer for Mennonite Mutual Aid, has designed the logo (at left) for Wichita '95, the joint conference of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. "I chose the circular line to represent a Christian's life journey. I placed the cross not at a static historical position but at a recurring point in the Christian's life, where it both alters and closes the path, representing continuation and transformation at the same time," said Horst. The theme for the adult conference is "Prepare the Way of the Lord." The theme for the youth conference is "With Jesus on the Road."

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Each month 1,200 people, mostly civilians, are killed or maimed by land mines. U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., plans to introduce a law that would prohibit the U.S. military from producing or stockpiling land mines. Leahy moderated a congressional hearing held in Washington May 13. Mennonite Central Committee submitted written testimony supporting the ban and urging that restrictions be widened to include cluster bombs. MCC is currently working on a mine removal project in Laos (see *The Mennonite*, May 10, page 14).

Goshen College announces an opening for **head coach of women's basketball.** Part-time position beginning in July for the 1994-95 academic year and beyond. Planning and recruitment work would start earlier. Responsibilities include coaching and developing the women's basketball program; recruiting quality student athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; planning, organizing and implementing budget and schedule. Master's degree preferred. Instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the collegiate level. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resumé and three professional references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.**

Eastern Mennonite College invites applications for the following two positions in an Adult Degree Completion Program in Management and Organizational Behavior. This is a new program to be implemented in October or in January 1995. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

- **Program director:** Master's degree in business or related area required. Doctorate preferred. Experience in management and administration essential. Experience in adult education highly desirable. Responsibilities include administration of the new program and some teaching. Appointment date: July 1.

- **Program representative:** Minimum of bachelor's degree required. Experience in promoting, marketing, advertising, public relations and strategic planning essential. Must possess strong communication skills. Responsibilities: Develop and implement marketing and advertising plan; coordinate student recruitment, admissions and financial affairs for each class. Appointment date: Aug. 1.

Send resumé to **Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.**

Business manager for Mennonite retreat center and camp in Pocono Mountains of northeast Pennsylvania. New position, primarily financial management plus computer maintenance. Must have accounting/bookkeeping skills and experience with MS-DOS systems. Assignment to start late summer.

Send resumé or contact **Paul Beiler, Spruce Lake Retreat, R.R. 1, Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; (717) 595-7505.**

Program director for Mennonite retreat center in Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. Responsible for planning, leading and monitoring programs throughout the year. Should have Mennonite/Anabaptist perspective and be able to relate with enthusiasm to all ages. Will give priority to people with teaching skills and interest in outdoor learning experiences. Salaried position to begin late summer or early fall.

Send resumé or contact **Paul Beiler, Spruce Lake Retreat, R.R. 1, Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; (717) 595-7505.**

Systems technician, academic programs. 12-month, full-time position. Assist with the technical aspects of installing and maintaining campus information systems. Primary responsibility will be to support users in academic departments, especially labs/networks in business, computer science and the seminary. B.A. in computer science or computer information systems, or equivalent combination of education and experience. Minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

If interested, please contact **Personnel office, Eastern Mennonite College & Seminary, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.**

Positions open at **Freeman Academy** for 1994-95:
1. **Bible teacher and campus pastor**, full time
2. **Development director**, part time
3. **Spanish teacher**, part time
4. **Boys' basketball coach and soccer coach**

All positions open until filled. Freeman Academy is a Christian school, grades 5 to 12, affiliated with the General Conference Mennonite Church.

To apply, send letter and credentials to **Leroy Saner, Principal, Freeman Academy, Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029; (605) 925-4237.**

Emmanuel Mennonite Church of Winkler, Man., is looking for a full-time **leading pastor.** Starting time is negotiable.

Please send resumé to **Pastoral Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 960 Pembina Ave., Winkler, MB R6W 1X4.**

Teachers for missionary children in Burkina Faso: The children of Mennonite missionaries in Burkina Faso will need new teachers for the 1995-96 school year. Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, the cooperative mission of six Mennonite denominations, has several families serving in this West African country. Currently seven children grades 3 to 8 attend the school in Orodara. They need trained and experienced teachers willing to serve at least two years in this setting. Necessary language training will be provided.

For more information, contact the mission agency of your Mennonite denomination: **Commission on Overseas Mission**, General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100; *or* **Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission**, 59466 County Road 113, Elkhart, IN 46517, (219) 875-5552.

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **video producer** (Akron, Pa.). This salaried position is available Sept. 1, 1994. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have at least six years experience in actual video production as well as overseeing video production; must be committed to teamwork, "more with less" productions and able to juggle multiple productions simultaneously.

Interested people in the United States contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 South 12th Street, P.O. Box 500, Akron, Pa. 17501-0500, (717) 859-1151.** Applications due **July 15.**

Guest group coordinator at Mennonite retreat center in Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. Primarily responsible for working with guest groups throughout the year. High priority given to social, clerical and telephone skills. Salaried position to begin in summer.

Send resumé or contact **Paul Beiler, Spruce Lake Retreat, R.R. 1, Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; (717) 595-7505.**

Mennonite Collegiate Institute

Invites applications for 1994-95 for the following positions:

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- **Senior high Bible and Mennonite history teacher**
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- **Residence life coordinators (male and female)**
  Christian commitment, enthusiasm for working with teenagers, leadership abilities, experience and/or training in counseling, and interest in music or sports are desirable qualifications.

Please forward your resumé and transcripts to Allan Dueck, Principal, Box 250, Gretna, MB R0G 0V0.

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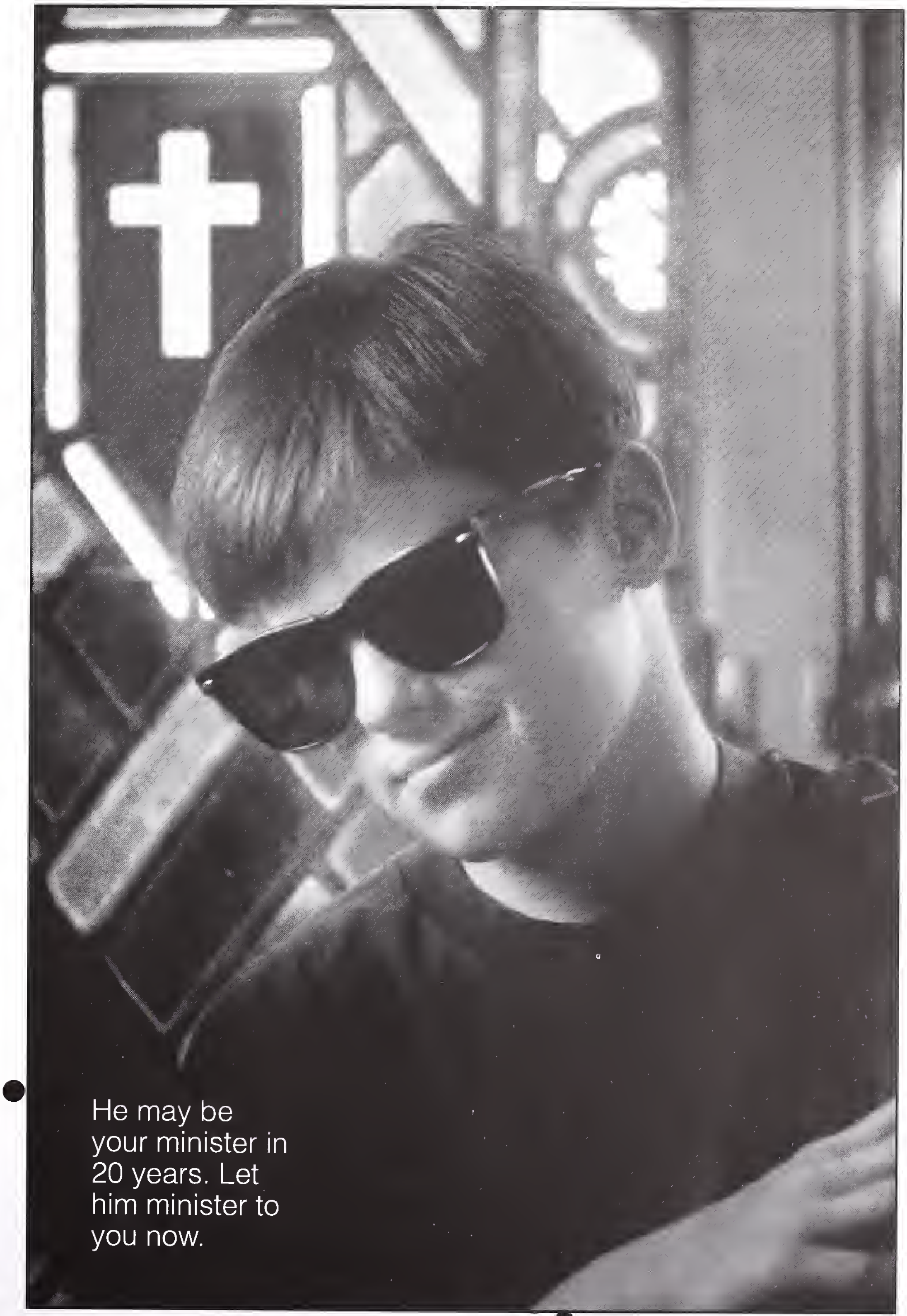
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FILMS

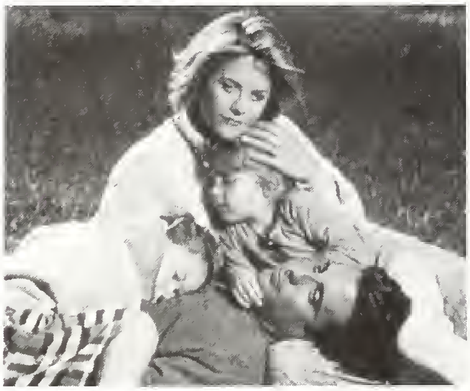
Creeping, destructive force

When a Man Loves a Woman, *written by Ronald Bass and Al Franken, directed by Luia Mandoki*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor

While many films show people drinking alcohol with no adverse effect, this film shows the creeping, destructive force of an addiction to alcohol.

Meg Ryan plays the fun-loving, sexy wife and mother who has trouble getting up in time for work and sneaks a drink of vodka from her closet late at night. Her calm, steadfast husband (Andy Garcia) enjoys her zaniness but has to step in to keep the household running and cover up her problem with excuses.



Healthy family: *Ryan and Garcia struggle to hold a family together as alcohol tears it apart.*

He may love her, but he is unable to show her the tough love she needs to confront the problem that is tearing their family apart. She finally reaches her limit when she drunkenly hits her daughter.

She goes to a private clinic to dry out, then joins Alcoholics Anonymous to stay on the wagon. But her change calls for her husband to change as well. What she had thought of as his steadiness and support now feels like manipulation and control. As they struggle to understand themselves and each other, their marriage splits apart from the strain.

The ripples of pain that alcoholism cause in a family are heartrending, and *When a Man Loves a Woman* will move you to tears as that pain unfolds. Except for a few details the script rings true; it does not offer easy answers. And the performances of Ryan and Garcia are riveting.

This film is about communicating with those we love. Though not for children, it provokes reflection on what is needed to be a healthy family.

BOOKS

Splitting mission work

Bridging the Gap: Evangelism, Development and Shalom *by Bruce Bradshaw (MARC—World Vision International, 1993, 183 pages)*

Reviewed by Erwin H. Rempel, Newton, Kan.

Bridging the Gap is the fifth in MARC's Innovations in Missions series, edited by Bryant L. Meyers. The series is designed to inform mission strategists, executives, mission professors, students and the larger Christian community of new directions in mission.

Bruce Bradshaw serves as director for holistic development research for MARC. He served in East Africa both as a teacher and development worker. He has connections with Mennonites. He has served with Eastern Mennonite Missions in Ethiopia and worships with the Peace Mennonite Fellowship in Southern California.

Mennonite missiologist Paul G. Hiebert in the book's foreword sets the stage for the problem Bradshaw addresses. "Nothing," claims Hiebert, "has hindered the modern mission movement more than modern dualism that separates body from spirit, science from religion, and natural from supernatural." The impact of these gaps on Christian mission has resulted in a mission agency emphasis on evangelism and a service agency emphasis on relief, development, peace and justice.

The central thesis of the book, according to Bradshaw, "is that the biblical worldview is not a blend of the Western and primal worldviews. Rather, the biblical worldview is a third way that affirms the validity of some assumptions from each worldview." The gap between evangelism and development is bridged by a holistic theology of Christian ministry that focuses attention on three theological concepts: creation, redemption and shalom.

The book is divided into three sections with 11 thought-provoking yet readable chapters saturated with relevant case studies. The first section examines worldview assumptions. The second section demonstrates contributions of development

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disciplines to the redemptive work of Jesus Christ in creation. The final section suggests ways to evaluate the presence of shalom in culture and throughout creation.

The gap Bradshaw attempts to bridge is one that Mennonites, in spite of our many declarations of the unity of word and deed, have institutionalized. We have organized Mennonite denominational mission agencies such as the Commission on Overseas Mission with an emphasis on evangelism, leadership training and church development. We have organized Mennonite Central Committee to engage in service ministries of relief, development, peace and justice. *Bridging the Gap* helps us recognize the gap separating evangelism and development and urges us to find a bridge of shalom. What is not as clear to me is how to structure a bridge in our Mennonite mission and service agencies.

Access to Acts

Acts *by Chalmer E. Faw (part of the Believers Church Bible Commentary Series, Herald Press, 1993, 335 pages)*

Reviewed by David Bartow, Zionsville, Pa.

The Believers Church Bible Commentary Series "is published for all who seek to understand more fully the original message of Scripture and its meaning for today—Sunday school teachers, members of Bible study groups, students, pastors or other seekers." It is written on a level that can be understood by all. At the same time, the scholarship behind it is impressive.

In the *Acts* volume Chalmer Faw provides an excellent introduction to the Book of Acts, exploring items such as nature of the book, author, date of writing and purpose. In the main part of the book he divides the text of Acts into 12 parts for fuller study. Each part has three sections—explanatory notes, the text in its biblical context, the text in the life of the church.

The explanatory notes retell the biblical narrative, adding details that clarify the action and give important information, such as meanings of unfamiliar words and phrases, geographical background, explanation of Greek words and different interpretations of scholars on the events. These are helpful to those not familiar with the text. Those already familiar with it may prefer to consult other commentaries that go into more detail.

The sections on biblical context relate the passages to wider biblical themes. Faw provides ample references to other Scriptures for further study.

The sections on the life of the church apply the texts to issues we face today. I found this the most helpful section. Faw wrestles with issues that have been controversial. He provides light from the text and from a Believers' Church viewpoint without being dogmatic about his views. There is room for the reader to ponder and discern the Spirit as he or she seeks God's will on these issues.

The book contains a helpful outline of Acts and excellent essays on relevant topics. There are also two maps, a bibliography and a list of resources.

Faw feels that the story of Acts is primarily one of witnessing. He sees Acts 1:8 as the key verse that gives a rough outline of the book. The prominence of witnessing shows up in the main points of his outline of Acts, which is also the outline for his commentary. His approach to the Book of Acts is conservative without being dogmatic. He recognizes that others may have differing, valid interpretations, but he clearly states his own positions. This makes the commentary a useful one for a variety of readers.

Books about family

Books recommended by Provident Library Associates Network

- **What's a Smart Woman Like You Doing at Home?** by Burton, Dittmer and Loveless (Mothers at Home, 1992)
- **Discovering Motherhood** by Burton, Dittmer, and Loveless (Mothers at Home, 1992)
- **Good Morning, Merry Sunshine** by Bob Greene (Atheneum, 1984)
- **Creative, Confident Children: Making the Most of the Preschool Years** by Maxine Hancock (Harold Shaw Publishers, 1992)
- **Adventures for Growing Families: 52 Weeks of Life-Related Devotions for Families with Grade-School Children** Wes and Sheryl Haystead (Victor Books, 1993)
- **Honey for a Child's Heart: the Imaginative Use of Books in Family Life** by Gladys Hunt (Zondervan Publishing House, 1969)
- **Playing Smart: A Parent's Guide to Enriching, Offbeat Learning Activities for Ages 4-14** by Susan K. Perry (Free Spirit Publications, 1990)
- **And Then There Were Three: An Ode to Parenthood** by Sara Wenger Shenk (Herald Press, 1985)
- **Little Lamb, Who Made Thee? A Book About Children and Parents** by Walter Wangerin Jr. (Zondervan Publishing House, 1993)
- **Welcome Home** (Mothers at Home, 8310A Old Courthouse Road, Vienna, VA 22182)

Other family resources

- **Enjoy Your Middle Schooler** by Wayne Rice (Zondervan, 1994, $8.99 U.S.) provides information to help parents relax and enjoy their child's adolescent years.
- **You Can Change the World** by Jill Johnstone (Zondervan, 1993, $19.99 U.S.) teaches children ages 4 to 12 about countries and people groups using stories, maps and illustrations. It describes the world's main religions and lists places to find out more about particular countries. Each section contains prayer requests specific to that country.
- **The Kid-Friendly Dad** by Frank Martin (InterVarsity, 1994, $8.99 U.S.) tells of the author's struggles to connect with his children and offers ideas about what kids need most from their dads.
- **The Hurting Parent: Help for Parents of Prodigal Sons and Daughters** by Margie M. Lewis with Gregg Lewis (Zondervan, 1994, $9.99 U.S.) focuses on "Where do we go from here?" rather than "What did we do wrong?"

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Editorial

Give up the fortress mentality

In families we experience our deepest joy and our greatest pain. How we live together as families says much about how we live. From the beginning the family has been the arena in which God has worked to bring love and justice into the world.

Families come in all shapes and sizes. While we often think of "family" as a nuclear family—mother and father and their children—this has not always been the understanding of the term.

The Bible broadens the concept to include ties not only of kinship and marriage but economic as well. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the family may include "father, mother(s), sons, daughters, brothers, sisters (until their marriage), grandparents, other kinsmen, as well as servants, concubines and sojourners (aliens)" (*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*). The Bible gives the family a central place in the passing on of the faith.

Jesus startled his hearers when he put off his blood family and declared, "Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother" (Mark 3:35). Early Christian writers referred to the church as "the household [family] of God" (1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 4:17).

Perhaps the first step in becoming healthier families is admitting that we cannot make it alone.

Today the family is in trouble, no matter how you define the term. We witness varieties of pain in families, from divorce to abuse to abandonment. At times family members treat each other viciously.

At the same time families can show a remarkable resilience. Some of the healthiest ones are single-parent, poor families who struggle but remain faithful to one another. On the other hand, many "typical" families—two-parent, two-children, two-car, middle-class households—are dysfunctional.

All families need support. So many factors—economic, cultural, political—place stress on families. How many of us live under enough stress already that it would only take the loss of a job or a major health problem or just a year or two more of our current patterns to tear our family apart?

Perhaps the first step in becoming healthier families is admitting that we cannot make it alone. We need to give up the fortress mentality of our little family against the world. We need to talk with each other. We may need to ask for support from our brothers and sisters in the church and offer our help in return. We may need to strengthen our ties with our extended family, with grandparents or siblings. We may need to take the time we don't think we have and spend the money we don't think we can afford and get counseling, whether as individuals or as a couple or as an entire family.

This issue, which celebrates the International Year of the Family, offers many ideas for strengthening families, our own as well as others. Every step we can take, no matter how small, to support family life, makes a difference. Take time to read a book to your children, visit a grandparent, eat meals together. Develop habits of talking with one another.

This past school year Jeanne, my wife, worked in the Newton, Kan., school system as a social worker as part of her schooling. She discovered families with tremendous needs. Problems that a child may be having at school are often rooted in what is going on at home. Family dynamics have a huge impact on people's behavior.

Our society has tended to ignore this. We place our values elsewhere—on the individual, on bureaucracies. We try to fight crime by building more prisons. We try to make peace by building more weapons. We try to find happiness by buying more things. We try to find security in bank accounts. In the meantime we let families fall apart, and people in crisis drift along, unaided.

The International Year of the Family is a good opportunity to commit ourselves to building a better society by strengthening family life. As a church we can commit ourselves to make our own and others' families healthier by building up the household of God. This will require prayer, wisdom, compassion and faithful attention to the many ways of making our families places of safety and love. *Gordon Houser*

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 12
JUNE 28, 1994

The cell movement church

- The shape of the church (see page 3)
- 'Any church not growing is dying' (see page 7)
- Evangelism leads to friendship (see page 8)

Christa Giesbrecht (left), Bonnie Brauer and Denise Venturato (right) share a moment in their cell group at Wellspring Christian Fellowship in Clearbrook, B.C. See story on page 8.

BIBLICAL
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JUL 6

Prologue

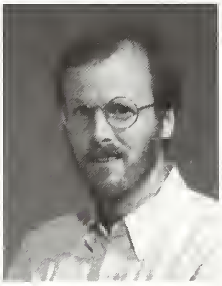
While the General Conference Mennonite Church has committed itself to church growth, not all our efforts have been successful. We learn from our own and from others' experience. In this issue we introduce a new strategy for being the church.

Leaders in the cell church movement do not even call it new. They claim it goes back to the early church as recorded in the Book of Acts, when believers gathered in homes to worship, pray and encourage each other.

The basic idea of cell churches is to gather in small groups and become involved in each other's lives as well as reach out to others. Read Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower's article (page 3) to learn about this movement. Read her answers to commonly asked questions about cell churches (page 5).

Then read about Wellspring Christian Fellowship, a Mennonite church in British Columbia that is set up in cell groups (pages 7-9).

Letters to the editor have been coming in steadily on a variety of subjects, and we're doing our best to get them into print (see pages 10-13). There will be more in coming issues.



Palmer Becker rounds out the discussion on cell churches with a Speaking Out piece on how face-to-face groups help churches grow (page 14).

Use this issue to talk with others in your Sunday school class about how your church can grow. *gh*

Next issue: Ramping the church is not enough

Cover: Photo by Carla Reimer

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8 Evangelism leads to friendship

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The SHAPE of the hurch

The cell church movement challenges us to discover what it means to be the church.

Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower

The church in the New Testament joined together people whose lives and values radically changed when they met Jesus Christ. The early Christians shared an intense life together as the body of Christ. They experienced the power of Christ in their lives. They saw to it that each other's needs were met. They met in homes to worship, pray and to build up and encourage each other. They shared the Lord's Supper together. These gatherings in homes were the basic Christian communities of the New Testament church (Acts 2:42-47; Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15).

Early Christians also met together in larger groups. They gathered daily in the temple courts to hear the apostles' teaching (Acts 2:42, 46). A larger group met together to wait and pray when Peter and John were in prison (Acts 4:23-31). When Paul came to Troas, many Christians came together to hear his teaching (Acts 20:6-11).

Christians in the early church not only experienced the joy of being Christ's body themselves but shared what they found with others. They boldly proclaimed the good news of Jesus to family, friends and strangers (Acts 5:42). As a result the church grew explosively.

Over the years the shape of the church changed. With the changes, its impact on people's lives and on the world diminished. But during the Reformation some Christians again caught the vision of what the church is called to be. Some of the reformers called for a change in theology and understanding of God's grace and salvation. The Anabaptists called for changes in the nature and shape of the church.

The Anabaptists began meeting in homes, where they studied the Scriptures, prayed, worshiped and experienced Christ's transforming power. As the church began meeting in face-to-face groups, lives once again changed in a dramatic way. The Anabaptists cared for each other. They encouraged and supported each other as they tried to follow Jesus in their daily lives. The Anabaptists also gathered together for worship and teaching in larger groups, often secretly to avoid persecution.

Anabaptists reached out to those around them. They tried to live as followers of Jesus and boldly invited others to faith in Christ. Their life and witness caused the movement to grow rapidly in spite of intense persecution.

Is such a church possible today? Is

Is the form of the church that was used in the New Testament and rediscovered by the Anabaptists in the 16th century relevant in the late 20th century?

Time of worship: *Kathy Tedesch and Duane Ruth-Heffelbower at a cell group gathering are part of Peace Community Church—Mennonite in Clovis, Calif.*

the form of the church that was used in the New Testament and rediscovered by the Anabaptists in the 16th century relevant in the late 20th century? Can there be a church where lives are radically changed as people meet Christ? Can the church be made up of small groups in which people are built up and encouraged to grow? Can these small groups reach out with Christ's love to those around them? Can there be a church that makes a powerful impact on the world as Christians proclaim the good news of Jesus in word and deed? Can the church grow explosively as our friends, family and acquaintances claim Jesus as Savior and Lord?

The worldwide cell church movement would answer a resounding yes. Strong cell churches have developed in Asia, Europe, Africa, Latin America, Australia, the former Soviet Union and North America.

Imprisoned: One growing cell church is the Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia, which was begun by Mennonite missionaries. In 1982 the communist government seized the church buildings and imprisoned key leaders. The church went underground with 5,000 members. It developed a cell church structure to survive. When it emerged 10 years later, the church had grown to 50,000 members and is still growing.

Amor Viviente, a cell church in Honduras, was also started by Mennonite missionaries. The church began in 1974. Today there are 4,000 members. The congregation has planted 17 other churches in Honduras and is planting cell churches in Costa Rica, New Orleans, Miami and New York City.

In North America, Mennonites are planting new cell churches. These include Peace Community Church—Mennonite in Clovis, Calif.; Columbia Basin Mennonite Community in Ephrata, Wash.; Wellspring Christian Fellowship in Clearbrook, B.C. (see story on page 7); University Park Fellowship in Sarasota, Fla. Cornerstone Mennonite Fellowship in Virginia is also a cell church.

God is working around the world creating a church that is similar to the New Testament church. Ralph Neighbour, a leader in the cell church movement, believes that a "second reformation" is taking place as the church is discovering the new structures that are helping bring new life to the church.

What does the cell church look like today? Modeled after the New Testament church, the cell church keeps Christ at the center and puts an emphasis on experiencing the living Christ. The cell church sees the church as a community of those who are "called out" ("ekklesia"). It builds on the understanding that all members of the church are ministers (Ephesians 4:11-12). All members of the body of Christ are to be involved in ministry to one another and to the world.

A cell church is made up of cells and celebrations. The cell group is the basic building block of the church. Just as our bodies are made up of cells joined together, so the church is built of cell groups. The cell group is the basic Christian community. It might be called a cell group, a home group, a shepherd group or a care group.

Cell groups meet in homes on a weekly basis. A cell group is made up of three to 15 adults. Many cell groups include children. A cell group is conscious that it is gathering as Christ's body, in Christ's presence. A cell group has both an inward and an outward focus. It looks inward as its members nurture each other. It looks outward as members pray for those outside the church and support each other in their efforts to witness and serve in the world. Each cell meeting has a time of worship, which includes

The cell group is the entrance point to the church. As new members join a cell and it grows, the cell divides.

children if the cell is intergenerational. Family milestones are celebrated. During adult-focused times, children have separate activities. The adults study the Scriptures together. Often the sermon topic and text from the previous Sunday is discussed in the cell group, giving members a chance to apply it to their daily lives. They also minister to one another and pray together. In the cell, adults are encouraged to grow in Christ and are equipped for ministry.

Evangelism has a high priority in a cell group. The group prays, plans and works together as a cell group to share the good news of Jesus with a hurting world. The cell group is the entrance point to the church. As new members join a cell and it grows to 15 members, the cell divides. Each cell has a leader-in-training so that when a cell divides there are two strong groups. New leader interns then prepare for the time when the new cell groups divide.

The cell groups in a church gather, usually on a weekly basis, for a celebration. The celebration in a cell church is a time of joyous praise and worship. It usually includes an extended time of singing. The celebration also includes preaching or teaching or both.

Cell churches tend to be highly structured to allow for ongoing coordination as the church grows. A common pattern is for five cell groups to be clustered together with one person who coordinates, provides resources and supports the leaders of those groups (see illustration on page 6). Five clusters of cells or 25 cell groups become a congregation served by a pastor. Congregations can provide training events for their members. They work together in service and witness efforts that require resources beyond those of a cell group. They worship together. Any number of congregations may be joined together as part of a cell church. All the congregations of a church might gather together for a praise and worship celebration once a week or once a year.

New wineskins: The cell church model provides new wineskins for the church as we approach the beginning of a new millennium. By itself, however, the wineskin will not bring renewal to the church. As people are renewed and experience the power and presence of the risen Christ in their lives, the cell church can be the

Questions people ask about cell churches

Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower

Can a traditional church become a cell church?

Those who have tried to make this change have found it difficult. Most cell churches began as such. Some traditional churches may want to help plant a cell church. Others may move in the direction of a cell church as they develop small groups for nurture, Bible study, prayer and outreach. Some churches will be able to become cell churches as they learn new ways of being the church. In such churches, leadership will develop a new vision and new ways of leading. Values in the church will change. Eventually structures can also change. Moving from a traditional church to a cell church can take four to five years or longer.

How is the cell church movement related to the small group movement of the past 30 years?

The cell church is an outgrowth of the small group movement. In small groups we have learned to nurture and support each other. Many churches have seen the value of small groups. The cell church movement calls us to see the small group as the church instead of one of the programs of the church. A difference between most small groups and cell groups is the focus on evangelism. Most small groups mainly look inward as members care for each other and seek to grow. Much of the vitality of cell groups comes from their outward focus. The emphasis on evangelism *and* care and nurture brings a healthy balance to the group. New people —especially new Christians—keep a group alive and growing.

What is the difference between a cell group church and a church with small groups?

Ralph Neighbour describes traditional churches as "program-base design" churches. Churches have many programs: children's activities, youth activities, women's groups, men's groups, Sunday school. In such a church, small groups are one of many programs, competing for people's time. In the cell church the small group *is* the church, and programs are eliminated. Cell churches believe we are living most faithfully as the body of Christ when we simplify the life of the church to focus on the basics of experiencing the presence and power of the risen Christ as we build each other up and reach out to the world. Some traditional churches that place a high value on small groups and have an active small group program are called "meta churches" ("meta" means "change" and refers here to a church changing from one way of being church to another). These are churches that hold some cell church values and focus on cells and celebration but maintain traditional church structures.

What about children in the cell church?

Many cell churches include children in their cells. There may also be a more traditional children's Sunday school program when the cells gather as a congregation. Some cell churches have children's cells led by adults. Children's cell groups focus on helping children deal with the day-to-day issues in their lives as they come to know and experience the living Christ.

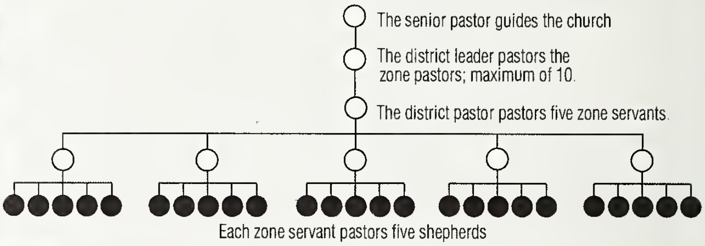
What is the difference between a cell church and a house church?

Cell churches tend to give more emphasis to mission outside the group, while house churches tend to focus more on commitment and accountability within the group. House churches generally have not had as strong a commitment to evangelism as cell churches. House churches often grow slowly. Usually each house church stands alone and is not connected to a larger local church body. The cell church is composed of many cells that are interrelated. The structure that connects them provides vision, leadership and resources to equip people for ministry.

Duane Ruth-Heffelbower

Bible study: *The author (left) in a cell group with Maggie Harper and Susan George*

The ideal model for cell group churches


The senior pastor guides the church
The district leader pastors the zone pastors; maximum of 10.
The district pastor pastors five zone servants.
Each zone servant pastors five shepherds

wineskin that receives them and allows the church to become a vibrant witness for Christ in the world.

Many elements of the cell church seem Anabaptist. Yet some aspects of it, as practiced by some cell churches, raise concerns for Mennonites: (1) the high priority the cell church places on evangelism may be uncomfortable for some Mennonites; (2) the cell church calls for stronger leaders than Mennonites have sometimes accepted; (3) the worship style in most cell churches is charismatic; (4) spiritual warfare is taken seriously in many cell churches; (5) much of the written material on the cell church is insensitive to inclusive language issues; (6) many cell churches are guided by conservative evangelical theology.

We should look at these questions seriously in light of our biblical understandings of the church and discipleship. Aspects of some cell churches may not fit our understandings, and we would not want to incorporate them. Other aspects may challenge us toward greater faithfulness as a biblical people. The cell church movement invites and challenges us to discover anew what it means to be the church and to design a model through which we can faithfully live and witness in the world today.

Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower is co-pastor at Peace Community Church—Mennonite in Clovis, Calif.

Resources on cell churches

- **Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook for the Cell Group Church** by Ralph Neighbour Jr. (Touch Publications, 1990, $14.95) describes the vision and structure of the cell church.
- **The I Factor: How to Influence Your World** by Jim Egli and Ben Hoerr (Touch Publications, 1993) is a workbook ($2.95) and leader's guide ($6.95) designed to help a small group focus on evangelism, learning how to identify people in their midst and reach out to them.
- **Called to Care** by Palmer Becker (Herald Press, 1993, $6.95) describes a vision for small groups in the church, with a training guide for small-group leaders.
- **Called to Equip** by Palmer Becker (Herald Press, 1993, $6.95) is a companion to *Called to Care* for pastors who are seeking to recruit, train, supervise and encourage small-group leaders.
- **20/20 Vision** by Dale Galloway (Scott Publishing or New Hope Community Church, 11731 S.E. Stevens Road, Portland, OR 97266) describes Galloway's development of lay-led small-group ministries at New Hope Church.
- **Prepare Your Church for the Future** by Carl F. George (Fleming Revell, 1991, $10.99) sees the small group as an integral part of the church which does not have a cell church structure.
- **Cell Church magazine**, published quarterly, includes articles on the cell church vision and strategy, along with stories of cell churches in various stages of development. (Touch Outreach Ministries, P.O. Box 19888, Houston, TX 77224; $12 U.S./$17 Cdn.)
- **Against Great Odds** (Gateway Films, 28-minute video, $5 rental) tells the story of the Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia. Available from Eastern Mennonite Missions, P.O. Box 628, Salunga, PA 17538; (717) 898-2251.
- **Touch Outreach Ministries** sponsors conferences, seminars, networking, and resources and consultants for cell churches and those interested in making the transition. Contact Jim Egli, (713) 497-7901, ext. 26.

If titles from Touch Publications are not available in a local bookstore, they may be ordered from Touch Ministries at (800) 735-5865, (713) 497-7901 in Canada, fax (713) 497-0904. Call for their catalog.

'Any church not growing is dying'

Cell groups are a key to spreading the Good News, says Mennonite pastor Gary Loewen.

Carla Reimer

Any church that is not growing is dying," says Gary Loewen, pastor at Wellspring Christian Fellowship in Clearbrook, B.C. "Mennonites have to be reprogrammed about evangelism" he says. "We have relied too much on biological growth, and all of a sudden we are coming up short."

Spreading the Good News is the "fundamental call" of Christianity, he says. "God became flesh and blood through Jesus Christ. God moved into our neighborhood."

Twenty-nine adults attended the first worship service at Wellspring Christian Fellowship in October 1992; today about 85 adults participate. The fellowship meets in an elementary school on Sunday mornings.

Loewen attributes the growth in numbers to the fellowship's emphasis on cell groups, which meet weekly. "All our members are expected to participate in a cell group and to reach out actively to the unchurched. There is no unemployment in the ranks of those who follow Jesus. Everyone is expected to discern and use their gifts."

They are also expected to contribute financially. From October 1992 through 1993, Wellspring had received support from two Mennonite churches in British Columbia, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church. This year, however, the fellowship is totally supported by its members.

"One of the primary functions of the cell groups is caring," says Loewen. "People come and bring issues related to their lives. They fellowship around the Bible and pray together."

The groups also provide members with a chance to be honest with each other. "People are looking for authenticity, not perfection. It is important for them to know that all of us struggle. In the cell groups, they are encouraged to share their concerns," he says.

Carla Reimer

'Fundamental call': *Gary Loewen thinks many Mennonite churches don't spend enough of their budget on evangelism. Wellspring Christian Fellowship spends about 10 percent of its budget on outreach, compared to the 1 to 2 percent many churches spend, he says.*

Ideally, to prevent stagnation, each cell group should give birth to another cell group every six to seven months, says Loewen, noting that one cell group at Wellspring has already done this.

Priests: With the focus on cell groups the fellowship does not offer any regular programs, not even Sunday school. The children meet in a cell group during the Sunday coffee break time. "Children are far more interested in being cared for than they are interested in programs," he says. "We have believed that kids cannot be priests to each other.

"When I was the pastor of a program-based church, it was easy to feel burnout. I could never plan enough programs or meetings," says Loewen. "Now the pressure is off.

"There is room for total creativity because the cell group can decide what it wants to do, whether that is feeding the hungry or visiting someone in the hospital."

As a result Loewen finds he rarely receives calls for help from the cell group members. "The leaders of the cell groups function as pastors," he says. "They are the first ones to receive a phone call about an emergency.

"What happens on a Sunday morning is only about 20 percent of the life of the church," says Loewen. "We want to be a community."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church, working out of Newton, Kan.

Evangelism leads to friendship

Christa Giesbrecht reached out to Denise Venturato and found an unexpected friend.

Carla Reimer

Growing up in Paraguay and then British Columbia, Christa Giesbrecht recalls hearing many sermons on evangelism. But while evangelism was a popular topic in the pulpit, she remembers there was "not much happening" in the pews.

"Everyone around me already had a Christian lifestyle. Most of my friends were Christians," says Christa. "If I did have non-Christian friends, I kept my mouth shut. I was never exposed to evangelism as such."

By the time she was a teenager, Christa was increasingly frustrated with how the church did not practice what it preached. But it wasn't until she moved with her husband, Vic, from Vancouver to Clearbrook that she found a Mennonite church that actively witnessed to non-Christians—Wellspring Christian Fellowship.

Yet when the pastor, Gary Loewen, asked Christa to reach out to a first-time attender, her first response was, "I don't want to do it." But she knew she could not refuse because "reaching out is one of the main reasons I attend Wellspring."

So she said yes, thinking her visit with Denise Venturato, a woman who attended Wellspring for the first time last Easter, would be short. "I thought I'd just say hello and drop off a plate of cookies," Christa says. "Denise invited me in for coffee, and we ended up talking for a couple of hours. We found we had a lot in common."

The second time the two women got together, they talked for five hours. "I thought, This is fairly easy. Denise was easygoing. I felt free to be myself," Christa says, admitting that "it is hard to express openly what you feel, but through Denise I learned that I shouldn't feel ashamed or afraid of sharing my faith."

Christa's visit proved to be a turning point for Denise, too. "I felt at home at Wellspring. The people were friendly. They didn't stay all to themselves," Denise recalls about her first visit to the church.

Cookies: Still, she had decided she would try a different congregation the following Sunday—until Christa showed up at her doorstep with a plate of cookies. "We had a nice chat. I liked her," Denise says. The next Sunday she attended Wellspring again. Soon after that she joined the cell group that Christa belonged to. And on April 17 she was baptized.

As a child growing up in Vancouver, Denise could "hardly wait to go" to a Baptist church on Sunday mornings. It was "the one place where I was safe. I did not have a good home life.

"My mom was a terrible example. She was always partying. She never was a mother," says Denise, noting that her parents separated when she was young. "My mom ended up killing herself at age 38 as the result of Valium and alcohol abuse."

Denise stopped attending church regularly when she moved to a different part of Vancouver at age 14. "At first it was because I didn't want to go to a new church alone as a teenager. Then I couldn't find a place where I belonged," she says.

Sharing struggles and joys: *Christa Giesbrecht (left), Bonnie Brauer and Denise Venturato (right) share a moment in their cell group at Wellspring Christian Fellowship.*

It wasn't until last spring, when Denise found herself suffering from severe depression, that she decided to look again for a church community. "It was the worst I had felt in my life. I was suicidal. I was receiving counseling and medication. They wanted to hospitalize me," she says.

At the time she was married to Bryan Venturato and unexpectedly pregnant with their fifth child. Her husband blamed her for the pregnancy, despite the fact that she had had a tubal ligation. In May 1993 they separated.

"I felt my life was worthless. I felt there was no way out for me," she says. "I searched for anything positive in my life and it was God. I thought, I need to go back to church. I didn't realize how much I needed it."

It took a while for Denise to feel comfortable enough to share her story with her cell group. "I've always been the type of person that handles everyone else's problems and not my own. But one night I let go the whole ball of wax. I made everybody cry, even the men," she says.

As she decreases her level of medication, Denise still has relapses and becomes depressed and confused. "But now I know I don't have to handle it alone. I can call anybody from the cell group," she says.

"We often think that if you're a Christian you have to have a hold on your life," Christa says. "At Wellspring I am learning how to rely on other people and to turn to God more. I can't imagine what church would be like if you didn't have anyone who could take a burden off your shoulders in times of struggle or share your joy in times of celebration."

Churches are not Victorian parlors

Gary Loewen describes ways to make worship services more accessible to everyone.

Mennonite pastor Gary Loewen isn't striving for perfection when he preaches at the Wellspring Christian Fellowship in Clearbrook, B.C.

Perfection is about the last thing Gary hopes to communicate to the approximately 85 people who attend this fellowship. Authenticity is more on the mark.

"Author Eugene Peterson wrote that churches are not Victorian parlors. It doesn't matter if things are in the right place," he says.

We sometimes lose track of why we are Christians; we can still follow Jesus without being perfect, says Gary, noting that "church can be fun, rather than drudgery."

'Church can be fun': *Loewen*

Gary tries to make the worship services at Wellspring accessible to everyone in the following ways:

- Alternative music. The fellowship does not own songbooks. Instead, it uses an overhead projector to display hymns and contemporary songs. Gary says that many people who attend Wellspring don't have a musical background.
- Sermons are geared for the unchurched. "I am an expository speaker. I try to make the biblical passage specific to their everyday lives," he said. Once he spoke about Moses as having a mid-life crisis because Moses thought he didn't need God. Members can also fill out a sermon outline, which has missing words, as Gary preaches.
- Language is inclusive. For example, Gary avoids acronyms and male-oriented language.
- A Bible is under each chair. Bible passages are referred to by page number.
- No bulletin. Instead people receive a newsletter, which includes information about the cell groups and other activities.
- Coffee and cookies are served for 30 minutes before and after the worship service—95 percent of the people stay for the coffee breaks.
- Casual clothes are the norm. People come in jeans and shorts.
- Everyone wears a name tag. First- and second-time attenders receive a stick-on name tag. Third-time attenders receive a permanent name tag.
- A prayer room is available to pray alone or with others following the service. Cell group leaders are also available to pray with people.
- A church member visits the home of a first-time attender within 48 hours of the worship service. He or she brings a plate of cookies and asks for five minutes to tell the person about Wellspring.
- The third or fourth time someone attends, Gary invites the person out for pie and coffee. *Carla Reimer*

Letters

More on the pagoda

My heart sang with joy when reading the story Earl Martin told in the March 22 issue (page 10) about cooperation between Mennonite Central Committee and the Buddhists in Vietnam.

What better way to introduce new friends to your old friend, Jesus Christ, than in such an act of love?

As we believe in a living Holy Spirit, we can trust that loving presence to continue to work among the people of the pagoda and those of the church. *Christine Purves, Bluffton, Ohio*

My heart was warmed upon reading the account by Earl Martin about Mennonite Central Committee helping to build a pagoda in Vietnam. It seemed like a creative way to break down the walls of hostility, and it made me proud to be a Mennonite. I doubt that many denominations would consider such a project.

The negative reaction from several readers in the May 10 issue reminded me that we are not all of one mind on this question. As an MCC alumnus, I remember similar kinds of gestures made toward people of other cultures in the name of love and for the purpose of winning them for Christ. We hardly know what a pagoda really means in the lives of Buddhists. From my own limited exposure in Asia, I sensed that Buddhists regard the pagoda as a place to make contact with their ancestors and pay their respect to them, much the way Mennonites reverently visit the museums in their community of origin and the sites of martyrdom in Europe.

During our service in Indonesia we learned that American missionaries were condemning the use of Hindu shrines for the purposes of prayer by Christians. A Balinese Christian pastor was distressed by this condemnation, because, he said, the family shrine is a symbol for family unity, and a refusal to pray there daily is understood as a rebellious, outrageous rejection of the family among the Balinese. He saw no reason why a Christian convert could not go on praying at the family shrine.

Surely we must be cognizant of what we are actually communicating to people of another religion or culture by our actions as well as our words. *Melvin D. Schmidt, Cheverly, Md.*

The letters (May 10 issue, page 9) discussing the building of a Buddhist pagoda by Mennonite Central Committee were fascinating.

I wonder what Jesus would have done in this situation. Would he have turned his back on the people? Would he have closed the lines of communication? Or would he have been the first to lay a foundation to build a temple that functions to bring the people of an area together? It is strange that we go out of our way to promote culture and identity yet fearfully back away when that culture is tied together with religion.

And suddenly, by even thinking this, I become a secular humanist, believing in nothing, saying that everyone is right. Suddenly people assume that I will never challenge a person's ideas, that I will tell anyone that whatever is right for him or her is good. But the truth of the matter is that I don't have to go to this extreme to believe in the growth of culture and religion.

I am not advocating a dismissal of Christian values, nor am I saying that everything is good and right. I just want people to open their eyes. I want our theology to grow, not become stagnant. Surely we can find a middle ground between accepting everything and sticking rigidly to uncompromising beliefs. When looking at the state the world is in, I agree that it is inane to say that whatever a person wants to believe in is right. But it is just as ludicrous to say that whatever a person wants to believe is wrong.

Let us learn from other cultures. Let us find a way to communicate. We love to hate. We love to destroy. Let's try something else for a while. For a change, let's try to be Christlike and meet the woman at the well. *James Friesen, Winnipeg*

I want to think that Monty Ledford (May 10 issue, page 9) used 1 Kings 11:7-8 in jest to prove the absurdity of building the Buddhist pagoda, but one cannot be certain. Too many readers I fear would read the reference and not go to the biblical text to confirm what is therein.

A statement out of context becomes a pretext. May we all hold fast to our biblical moorings as our guide for faith and practice. *Rodney Anderson, Marion, S.D.*

The author responds: My recent "Speaking Out" column (March 22 issue, page 10) raised a question we struggled with in Vietnam as Mennonite Central Committee workers. Christian and Buddhist villagers came together in the village of Tam Dao and asked us to assist them in repairing (not building) a church and a pagoda. MCC does not encourage Buddhism or build pagodas, so this was an unexpected request. It was also unexpected because, although religious practice had been discouraged for decades by the Vietnamese government, this proposal had the support of local officials.

The joy and anticipation of these Christian and Buddhist neighbors were beyond communication. The chance to enjoy new religious freedom, with government approval, for them was a remarkable breakthrough.

In a country where Christianity had often been associated with foreign bombs and warfare, this project seemed an opportunity to express reconciliation and genuine Christian love. And because the local Christians supported the proposal, as the MCC director I felt moved to respond positively to their modest request.

Knowing that MCC seeks to be honest and open about the difficult decisions we face, I decided to test this action with the larger church. The feedback we've received has been varied. Some have felt the decision appropriate for the particular setting. But I now realize that our decision in Vietnam represented an offense to some in our church.

I now believe I failed in the procedure for making the decision. Knowing now that some people see this project differently from the way I saw it in the village, I believe I was wrong to make this decision in the field without first clearing this with MCC people in North America.

Since that decision nearly a year ago, a guest house for the Christian church was rebuilt and is now used for singing classes. At the pagoda, some termite-eaten posts and the wooden part of the roof were replaced.

Standing in that village last year, it seemed this proposal was not about Buddhism but about restoring relationships that had been damaged by war and intolerance. But I am sorry for the way I handled this decision. I only pray that the witness of God's love will transcend our human weakness. *Earl Martin, Akron, Pa.*

Theology of creation needed

1995 is the 25th anniversary of Earth Day. Next year is also when the Confession of Faith in Mennonite Perspective will be presented in Wichita, Kan., to the joint assembly of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church for approval.

But environmental issues continue to elude Mennonites. The new confession has been in the works since 1985. In that time it has not advanced a theology of creation. On the contrary, it not only fails to "confess" the destruction and devastation of our environment, it centers its main theme not around stewardship or caring for the creation but on the "new heavens and new earth," a term that does not spring directly from the Gospels.

"New heavens and new earth" is used seven times in the confession. It is highlighted in the beginning boldfaced paragraphs of Article 4—Creation and Divine Providence—and Article 24—Reign of God—and in parts of Article 21—Sabbath and Jubilee Living, making it the central theme of environmental Mennonite thought.

Why would Mennonites cast in their lot with former Secretary of Interior James Watt, who justified using up this earth as fast as possible by his interpretation of this imagery from Revelation? After all, if a "new heavens and new earth" are just around the corner, then you have a Mennonite stamp of approval to disregard this fragile little planet.

Perhaps you would like Mennonites to send an earth-friendly message next year. Comments on the draft confession should be sent right away to the Inter-Mennonite Confession of Faith Committee, 421 S. 2nd, Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516. *David E. Ortman, Seattle*

GOOD GUESS FELIX!! BUT I'M AFRAID THAT ZORRO WAS NOT ONE OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

Honest letter deserves a response

In his honest letter, "What I Need from Church" (March 22 issue, page 8), Ed C. Epp has done us all a great service. I'm surprised there hasn't been more of the response he asked for already. I made copies for the deacons and members of the witness and outreach commissions of our church.

My first response to Ed's letter was to say, "C'mon, Ed, let's get with it. Church doesn't mean anything if it requires no difficult choices of anyone." But now I think that's only half the truth.

There is a sense in which our faith commitment must challenge the over-commitment of time and money that characterizes contemporary professional life. If we Christians call each other to miss out on some of the demands and options of modern life for the sake of Christ and each other, then we may just be doing our jobs. There's more at stake than our "history."

But the other side of the coin is that the traditional church culture rooted in Sunday morning that served some now excludes others because of changes in the economy, society and their professions. So I hope the Ed Epps and the churches of this world—both old and new—can move toward each other. The call to commitment is just as strong and as costly today as it ever was. But the call to the church to go into all cultures and make disciples, instead of waiting for a dwindling number of people to come and adapt themselves to our traditional church culture, still applies as well. *Mathew Swora, McPherson, Kan.*

Dear twentysomething

Regarding the April 26 editorial:

Sometimes God does feel a hundred miles away—and sometimes I feel a kiss on my cheek.

Eternity is so close, I hear its breath as warm as fire—and it is so far away.

The kingdom of God came and it is missing.

Thanks for your struggle. It is like spring peeking through this present sod. *Ann Wenger ("40-something"), Elkhart, Ind.*

No shortage of pastors

The problem of growing shortages of pastors in the church is not a surprise to anyone who takes the time to look at the world. But there is a far more serious problem in our midst: the discouragement of a particular group of seminary students and graduates. I am a 29-year-old woman making plans to move to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary next year to begin studies. Not only do I lack family support (my parents are not believers, so I understand their reluctance), but I also lack the support of the church-at-large because I am a woman.

While many of my own congregation do support me, I have heard nothing but discouragement and stories of despair from the wider conference. At our recent Eastern District Conference I was told point-blank that the "district does not ordain women." There was no explanation or apology.

I have spoken to two ordained women in the district and heard stories of discouragement and hope. Discouragement because of our district's refusal of ordination, and hope because they were ultimately ordained in other districts. From what I understand, finding a pastorate and settling into a congregation are stressful enough. Now add the long, disheartening process of ordination refusal and an even longer process of obtaining ordination from another source. What person in their right mind would even start school?

Yet this is what I face. Picking up our family (we have a 4- and 2-year-old), renting our home (my husband's 12-acre family home) and moving to another state is not easy in itself. Now I take it on in the midst of discouragement and feeling unwelcome in the profession.

It doesn't seem to matter that if/when I graduate I could offer something to the field. It doesn't seem to matter that I have wonderful organizational skills. It doesn't seem to matter that I have experience in mental health and co-dependency counseling. It doesn't seem to matter that I have experience as an office manager. It doesn't even seem to matter how committed I am to Christ. What does seem to matter is that I wear a skirt and have had children. What an unfair judgment!

Shortage of pastors? Why cry wolf when there are plenty of committed and capable women out there literally begging for positions? It seems to me the shortage only exists in our minds. *Judy L. Guasch, Zionsville, Pa.*

Am I a Mennonite?

I am a Wiebe, so I am Mennonite. My grandfather Wiebe and my grandfather Hiebert were Mennonite preachers, so I am Mennonite. My brother is a Mennonite preacher, I went to Mennonite colleges, I married a Mennonite woman, I belong to a Mennonite church, my children were christened in a Mennonite church, some of my favorite foods are borscht and zwieback, I speak German and I can trace my lineage back to the 16th century, all Mennonite.

Am I Mennonite? I respect the land, I believe in hard work, I believe in nonviolent conflict resolution and I believe in community. But I do not worship Jahweh.

I admire Christ, but he is never called God. I admire the Good Book, but it is only half. I understand the metaphor "Father," but it is incomplete. I hear the word "Lord" and I see a castle on the hill. I do not deny God. Even by the name given by a nomadic desert tribe of sheepherders he has power.

Human beings communicate symbolically. Letters are symbols; words are groups of symbols representing an aspect of our perceived reality. The words used to define our deity, our guide, our highest dream must be loving, impartial and powerful.

We all know that "it takes two to tango." It takes two to dance the dance of creation. Where, dear Lord, is my Queen? Where, oh holy Father, is my loving Mother? Where is She?

Confession: I have looked for Her and I have found Her. I have seen Her beauty and I have felt Her grace. She is imminent and She is alive. She is not coming to take us away, She is here to make our home.

You will say that the word is not God. Or, In the beginning was the Word?

Am I a Mennonite? *Roland Wiebe, Graton, Calif.*

Unjust propaganda

My special thanks to the editorial staff for publishing, in the May 10 issue, the articles on health care in America and in Canada by Dr. Willard Krabill and Dr. Paul Peters, respectively.

One of the most glaring examples of unjust propaganda appeared in the February issue of *Reader's Digest*: "Is This the Kind of Health Care We Want?" Illustrated in a graph by Joshua Shreier, the message of this article is that there are long "hospital waiting lists in Canada" for "surgical procedures." What most readers will not notice is the fine print in the lower right-hand corner, page 111: "Waiting times are for non-life-threatening surgical procedures."

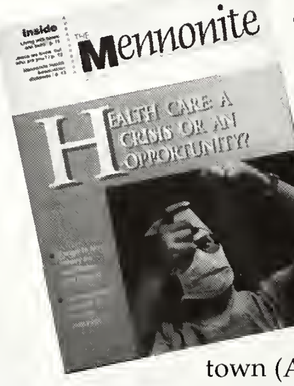
Canadian health care is not without flaws, but as Dr. Paul Peters points out, "The inequities of the Canadian system are but a faint glow compared to the glaring injustice that the current U.S. system imposes on millions of people." And please note what Peters says about Hillary Clinton in his last two sentences. *Louis Goertz, North Newton, Kan.*

Be like Paul

Jacob Elias' article in the May 10 issue, "Jesus We Know, But Who Are You?" (page 12), was quite an eye-opener for me. The biblical accounts of the apostle Paul's evangelistic ministry have never ceased to thrill me when I reread them. Are the expressions rebirth, revival and evangelism upsetting to some Mennonites? If so, why?

What really took place in the heart and mind of the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-20)? Can one really change an attitude of bitter hate to one of love and respect in the twinkling of an eye? Wasn't this an astonishing miracle? God definitely had plans for this outspoken man.

Paul's preaching resulted in brutal punishment and imprisonment (Acts 16:19-24). It also led to his being stoned and dragged out of Lystra, presumably dead. While disciples gathered around him, he arose (perhaps came back to life) and walked right back into town (Acts 14:19-20).



Was this man crazy, or was he, as some say, "on fire for the Lord"? This same Paul stated in Philippians 1:21, "For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain." Wow!

Are we reluctant to speak for Christ or give constructive suggestions (in a loving, Christian way) when the opportunity presents itself?

I had an outspoken Army buddy (also a pacifist), Charlie Waring, who often mentioned that his goal was to become an apostle Paul, and work for the Lord. This goal was soon realized, since he was wounded on our first day as medics on the front lines in France; and even while recuperating in the United States from a shrapnel wound he restored worn Bibles. I've often thanked the Lord for bringing Charlie into my life. You'd never convince him that the apostle Paul was too evangelistic. *Oliver Stucky, Moundridge, Kan.*

THE Mennonite

JUNE 28, 1994

WINDOW TO MISSION

The task of discernment

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Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. Ps. 143: 10a

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Mission Statement Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: 1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; 2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; 3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; 4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Lessons on the journey

by Gay Kauffman
MCC learning tour participant

Honduran woman, making tortillas by hand.

In memory they are strong and beautiful, the women of El Salvador and Honduras who taught me on my journey. Maria Eva Garcia is a wife and mother of two sons from San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Maria has opened her one-bedroom home to many visitors from North America. When LaVerle Schrag and I stayed with them, this family of four gave us the bedroom, while they slept on cots in the living room. Maria gave generously out of her limited resources. Could I give so generously out of my wealth?

Maria is one of many women I met in Honduras and El Salvador on an MCC learning tour, whose example taught me about nurturing and being nurtured. Reflect on their stories. What have they to teach you?

Gloria Paz is a nurse who works for MAMA Project, a Honduran Mennonite Church women's organization. Gloria's life is dedicated to bringing hope to the many living in extreme poverty there. She says, "The job is too big, but we help in small ways." She donated land, part of her inheritance, to be used by MAMA Project. Gloria is a single mother whose 5-

I wonder if we know how to receive from others? Can we let others nurture us?

The MAMA Project ("Mujeres Amigas" [women friends] Miles Apart) began as a food supplement program for Honduran children. Women's groups in Pennsylvania made "superbarras," nutrition bars similar in appearance to granola bars, which were distributed in Honduras.

MAMA Project began in 1987 as a partnership between Honduran Mennonites and women in Eastern Pennsylvania, with Dr. Priscilla Benner, a member of Shalom Christian Fellowship, Greenville, Pa., as director. It has grown to include sewing classes, literacy classes, preschools, vitamin A distribution programs and promoting community banks, with plans for a residential nutritional rehabilitation center which will train mothers in motherhood skills.

year-old daughter lives with her grandparents on a farm outside the city. She sees her daughter only on weekends. Of their parting on Sundays she says, "We cry a lot." Gloria's life is spent helping others, sacrificing many of her own needs. Do we see the needs around us? Are we willing to sacrifice?

Maria Cadix, wife of the pastor of the Tegucigalpa Mennonite Church, told of burning both hands while cooking. She, who so often helps others was suddenly unable to do many things for herself and had to receive help. She praised God for teaching her the importance of receiving. I wonder if we know how to receive from others? Can we let others nurture us?

The people from Rosa Guardado's town in El Salvador began to farm cooperatively and were, therefore, persecuted. Forced to leave, some went to San Salvador and others, like Rosa and her husband, to refugee camps in Honduras. She lost her first husband in the war. Sometimes she went as long as three days without water while hiding from the soldiers. There were times when bullets came so close that she didn't know if she'd been hit. Rosa has suffered, recently losing her second husband to cancer. But she confidently affirms that, "God has been and will continue to be with us." I wonder if we recognize God's presence in our lives? How has God been with us?

I continue to learn and be challenged by these women. What can their stories teach you?

Gay Kauffman lives in Beatrice, Neb., where she volunteers for several organizations involved with peace and justice issues. She and her husband, Ed, pastor of Beatrice Mennonite Church, have two sons.

Some reflections on a 16th-century mother and martyr

by Jeni Heitt Umble

"I have abided the time and borne you under my heart with great sorrow for nine months, and given birth to you here in prison, in great pain, [and] they have taken you from me," wrote Janneken van Munstdorp in a letter to her month-old-daughter. Her husband, Hans, had previously been martyred for his Anabaptist beliefs. Janneken's death sentence was delayed because of her pregnancy.

As a new mother, I am humbled by the steadfast faith of women such as Janneken—a faith that enabled them to forsake their own children for a martyr's death. Does her experience have anything to say to us? At first glance Janneken's commitment to forsake all, even the care, nurture and education of her own child, seems so foreign to our own situations that we dismiss her story. But the strength of her faith calls us to examine our own.

"Here I lie, expecting death every morning."

Imprisoned, pregnancy for Janneken was not a time of joyful anticipation. The pain of giving birth gave way to the pain of separation from her infant and from this life. Yet this young mother chose to die rather than renounce her faith.

I humbly confess that I do not think I could make such a choice. I am thankful that life in 20th-century North America does not call upon me to make life-or-death faith decisions. Yet within the context of my faith I have made difficult choices this year: I have given up proximity to close friends, a caring church community, meaningful volunteer work and fulfilling employment. I have moved halfway across the country and placed my infant son in child care in order to pursue a course of study that I hope will lead to further service in the wider Mennonite community. I do not know where these choices will lead, but I believe that I am where God wants me. Although the results may not be evident for many years, the lives of my immediate family are certainly affected by my choices.

"I leave you here; Oh that it had pleased the Lord, that I might have brought you up; I should so gladly have done my best with respect to it; but it seems that it is not the Lord's will. And had I remained with you for a time, the Lord could still take me from you."

Janneken believed that those who truly follow the example of Christ will suffer. Her impending martyrdom was God's will and even if she recanted, illness or accident could just as easily separate her from her daughter.

A written testament and a small monetary inheritance were all she had to leave her daughter.

Of course I have thought about how illness or accident could separate me from my child. Hopefully, I have been practical in my preparations: choosing guardians, executing a will, buying insurance, saving for his college education. I know he will be physically and financially secure, but what provisions should I make for his spiritual nurture?

"Since I am now delivered up to death...I must through these lines cause you to remember, that when you have attained your understanding, you endeavor to fear God."

Janneken put her beliefs on paper, hoping that her daughter would learn to read and thereby come to accept the same faith. This testament was especially important because her daughter would be raised by Janneken's parents and a sister who were not Anabaptists.

Could we, who so carefully choose the right day-care, screen babysitters and monitor school curriculum, allow someone else to raise our children?

"Deal kindly with my little child...which I love as my own soul, so that I cannot write of it without tears."

Janneken takes such care to explain why her faith requires her to abandon her child that sometimes she sounds more like a teacher than a mother. This plea to her parents indicates that Janneken's strong faith did not make her impervious to the pain of separation.

I confess that I don't understand the intensity of her beliefs. How she could choose to die, to orphan her baby? Why couldn't she publicly recant, privately believe and thereby have a future with her daughter? How could she so earnestly follow Jesus' command to forsake family for his sake?

Jeni Hiett Umble, one of our WM scholarship recipients, is working on a Masters of Divinity with a concentration in church history at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. She and her husband, Art, and son, Rusty, attend Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind.

"My dear little child, I commend you to the Almighty...that He will keep you, and let you grow up in His fear, or that He will take you home in your youth."

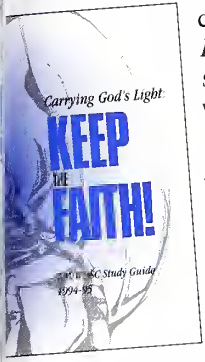
It sounds callous, yet Janneken's martyrdom was based on her firm faith. She wanted her daughter to arrive at that same faith or else die in the innocence of childhood.

Unlike Janneken, we are able to give our children a good understanding of the Bible and of our own Mennonite history. But is it enough? Do our children really know about our faith? Do they see us in Bible study, in prayer, in meditation? Do we make time to nurture our faith in our busy lives? What are our children learning from our examples?

We are not called upon to choose between motherhood and martyrdom. We are asked to be faithful where we are. Our choices may be less dramatic, but they are not less important.

New Bible study encourages women to "keep the faith!"

In mid-June congregations of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church will each receive three copies of *Keep the Faith!*, an 80-page study guide for women's groups.



The booklet was jointly produced by Women in Mission (WM) and the Women's Missionary and Service Commission (WMSC) . It is the third of a three-part series of program materials on the theme "Carrying God's Light."

The heart of the booklet is a devotional study of Hebrews written by Brenda Martin Hurst. The study guide invites women of faith to reflect together on what they believe, why they believe and what difference faith makes in how they live.

"Keep the faith and pass it on with integrity" is the theme of the 11-part study. Each lesson includes guidelines for group leaders, along with suggestions for discussion and a call to faithful action.

The booklet also includes a Christmas program and a set of 10 "bright ideas" for other special events and seasons.

Copies can be ordered from the WM office, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100. The cost is $4.00 U.S./$5.00 Can. per booklet.

Brenda Martin Hurst has journeyed in faith from her Mennonite Church roots in Lancaster County, Pa., to her current position as co-pastor of a General Conference Mennonite church in Kansas.

Brenda was raised in a family of nine children in rural Ephrata, Pa., and baptized at Martindale Mennonite Church. She was encouraged by teachers at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite High School to attend college and use her gifts in the church.

Brenda and her husband, Ray Hurst, attended Trinity College, Deerfield, Ill., served as lay youth ministers at Hess Mennonite Church, Lititz, Pa., and studied at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. Since 1986 they have served as co-pastors of Tabor Mennonite Church, rural Newton, Kans.

Brenda's interests are centered on her church and family. When time allows, she quilts, bowls, reads and goes camping. Currently her two sons, Zachary (age six) and Matthew (born this past February), are expanding her understanding of God and faith.

REMEMBERING THE PAST

by Bek Linsenmeyer

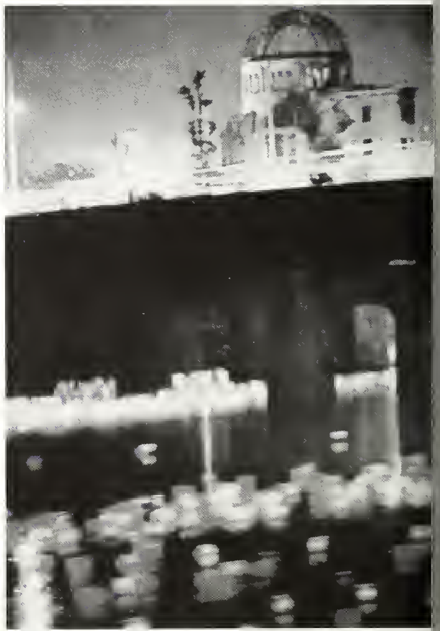
Each year at the end of the day on August 6, thousands of paper lanterns float down the rivers of Hiroshima, Japan. Each lantern ("toro") burns in memory of someone who died because of the atomic bombs.

The former mayor of Hiroshima, Shinzo Hamai, stated that "the people of Hiroshima ask nothing of the world except that we be allowed to offer ourselves as an exhibit for peace. We ask only that enough people know what happened here and how...and why...and that they work hard to see that it never happens anywhere again."

After putting her lantern into the river, one 12-year-old said, "I'll always remember how we worked together to make these lanterns, and I'll remember how they looked tonight. I hope we'll see a peaceful world." (*Dayton Daily News*, Aug. 7, 1990)

Throughout the world commemorative services are held on August 6. These words come from a 1992 service in Kansas City, Mo.: "We mourn those innocents whose lives have been extinguished by the ravages of war, and we remember those who have freely given their lives in the service of peace." Alice Ruth Ramseyer, COM missionary in Japan, reflects that the question "What can I do for peace?" took on fresh meaning after she attended the ceremonies in Hiroshima on August 6.

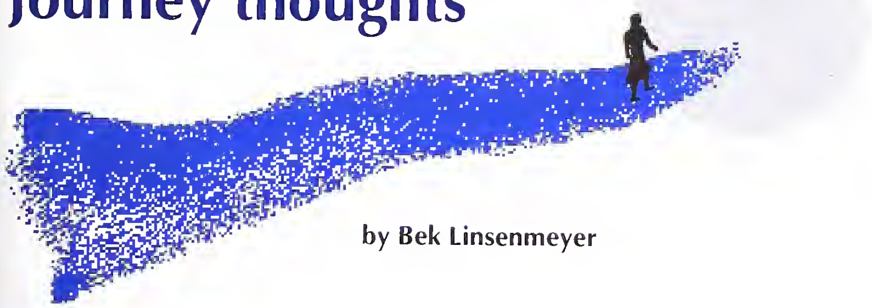
What will you do for remembrance, for peace? If you are interested in adding your lantern for peace to the thousands of others throughout the world, Women in Mission has directions for constructing floating lanterns. Request instructions from the WM office, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100. The Wilmington (Ohio) College Peace Resource Center has numerous resources in its Hiroshima/Nagasaki Memorial Collection which could provide ideas for a memorial service. Write or phone Helen Wiegel, Wilmington College, Pyle Peace Center, Box 1183, Wilmington, Ohio 45177; (513) 382-5338.



Paper lanterns float on the Moto Yasu River with the Atomic Bomb Dome in the background.

Remember, so that no one ever again will suffer such a tragedy.

Journey thoughts



by Bek Linsenmeyer

"Good Lord, look down upon us and make us humble and truly thankful" were words I often heard my Dad pray. I am thankful to have experienced them the other Sunday morning.

The foot washing was to be done between husbands and wives. While we had participated in foot-washing services, it would be a new experience to be together.

As Dean washed my feet I recognized a comfort, a lack of self-consciousness that was good. It was as I was kneeling before my husband, washing his feet, that an awareness washed over me that this is the one who cared for me when I was weak. This is the one who stuck with me when I was sick. This is the one who did not complain, the one who was willingly my servant. And now, I could wash his feet. As I knelt there, having just sung "Will you let me be your servant," that was my heart's desire. There was nothing I wanted to do more than make that act supremely loving.

I continue to reflect on those few minutes which are important minutes in my life. The association is not so much with Jesus washing the disciples' feet, but with that woman at the banquet pouring out her love. My action was inadequate. I could not express all the gratefulness I felt. I wonder if that was some of the cause of her weeping—that we can never pay the debt. But it did kindle in me a desire to live more lovingly and to continue to push out the boundaries of my love.

I need moments when I am humble and truly thankful for I am not at risk of becoming too subservient, but rather of being too demanding. The simple act of foot washing helped me focus on what is of real importance and therein to be thankful.

Bek Linsenmeyer, editor of *Window to Mission*, enjoys her involvement with Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church where her husband, Dean, is pastor. Bek and Dean have two children.

Miami confession

by Winifred Ewy

"I have a confession to make," said Roberto, in whose home Abraham and Sarah caravanners were laying floor tile. "When I watched these new friends from Kansas slowly get out of their car, I thought, 'What has my pastor done to me?' Now, at the end of the day I can see that each one of them has done much more than I could do. Now I must apologize for my thoughts."

These caravanners had just arrived in Miami at the invitation of pastors Gamaliel and Amanda Falla of the newly-established Encuentro De Renovacion (Meeting Place of Renewal) Mennonite Church. They had just traveled 1,800 miles from Newton, Kan. They were past retirement age, but they were not willing "to just rot" as one said. They had replaced the spring in their step with a determination to share from experience. They had volunteered to spend a week working in the Hispanic church and in members' homes, painting, laying tile and building fence. In addition, they found time to relax, travel and explore locally. Above all, they shared the depth of God's inclusive love.

It is significant that the church members chose the name Meeting Place of Renewal. A renewal experience was just what it was for the folks from Kansas. To go on a caravan involves some risk taking. Abraham and Sarah were risk takers in assenting to God's plan for them. Growth opportunities come when we say yes to plans that might have to be altered. Being receptive to God's leading allows us to find our own place of renewal.

Winifred Ewy with Cindy and Jazmin Falla in Miami. Winifred and her husband, Lester, are members of Bethel College Mennonite Church.

A refreshing renewal of dedication comes both to those ministering and those being ministered to. Both have taken risks of faith. Caravanners have taken advantage of unusual opportunities for rejuvenation as Abraham and Sarah did. Spiritual renewal came to us in Miami through a willingness to open ourselves to others.

So there you have it, Roberto. Keep on taking a risk with those "old folks." We'll do the best we can. And just look what you've done for us: you've given us a chance to broaden our faith.

Women in Mission supports Abraham and Sarah caravans through your contributions to the Commission on Home Ministries.

Was it worth it all?

by Gayle Voth

Be careful if you ask a friend how her work is going. It was after asking what was new in church education that I discovered a new Anabaptist children's curriculum was in the planning stages. I must have acted interested, because later I was asked to be on the Early Childhood Task Force of the new Jubilee curriculum. Right on the heels of that offer, I was asked to be a co-writer for a quarter of the new curriculum.

A commitment of this nature was no small matter. I already considered my life to be quite full as wife, mother, preschool director and part-time student.

After much prayer I finally said yes, partly for service reasons, as I would help plan sessions for teaching young children about God's love, and partly for selfish reasons—I thought it would be a good opportunity to do some creative writing while earning some extra money.

The task force meetings involved travel, and my daughter was convinced my plane would be the one to crash. Fortunately my husband was totally supportive of my endeavors, even though I assumed he would be helpless without me around. Imagine my amazement when I came home to a clean house, clothed children and food still in the freezer.

The writing was done at home where it took hours of intensive work. I am thankful my children, then age eight and 12, were old enough to entertain themselves, because they were on their own for long periods. Sometimes I thought I simply had to see my idea through to completion in one sitting. By the end of session 13 everyone in my family knew how I felt about word counts.

So was it worth it? Absolutely. My writing partner and I experienced God answering our feeble and numerous cries for help. We will always feel a bond. Although I had been in the field of early childhood education for a number of years, this opportunity forced me to explore some dormant gifts of story-and songwriting.

It also opened my eyes to the complexity of developing a new curriculum. I will never again take any curriculum for granted. So many people are involved in making the pieces of the curriculum puzzle fit, and I had the opportunity of meeting many of them.

The labors of commitment and the joys of fulfillment can happen simultaneously. Don't be afraid to say "Yes!"

Gayle Voth, her husband and two children, live on a small farm on the edge of Goessel, Kan., close to their family-owned drapery company. Their faith community is Alexanderwohl Mennonite where Gayle is elementary Sunday school superintendent.

The Commission on Education's new *Jubilee*! curriculum is a resource that will nurture children from an Anabaptist perspective. WM funds support this work.

Women discerning, women serving

by Kathleen Rempel Boschman

One of the benefits of having come halfway around the world to work is meeting a Slovenian missionary, Sister Zora. Zora is a tiny woman in her 50s. Prior to leaving on a sabbatical, she was the coordinator of the social concerns commission of the Catholic Church here. The AIDS program for which I work is a part of the commission.

Zora grew up in a religious home in Yugoslavia. As her faith grew, she developed an interest in social justice. Zora had hopes of becoming a lawyer but this was one profession her father did not want her to choose.

The nuns from her high school observed her faith commitment and concluded that she should serve their order. Her protests were seen as resistance to the will of God. After much prayer, Zora joined the order. She studied social work and then sought missionary service. She was sent to Botswana where she has lived for nearly 30 years.

When I met Zora, she was living in Gaborone, the capital city, and as coordinator of the commission, mainly working in the office. Seven years earlier, when the bishop recognized the need for the commission, Zora was called from a rural setting to begin the work. Only upon her departure did I learn that Zora does not particularly like city dwelling and that she much prefers working with people to office work. Still, she was dedicated to the work and believed in it.

People like Zora are an inspiration to me. She hasn't always done what she really wanted to do, but she knows what her gifts are and she has been willing to use them to serve God and her church.

At the beginning of this year, I became a mother. Prior to that I was a career woman for 12 years. Part of me would like to go back to work full time where the rewards are more visible on a daily basis and public recognition exists. The other part of me realizes that our daughter Lisa is a wonderful gift. My responsibility now is the hard work of being a mother. I believe that, like Zora, I should serve where I am called. That, in the end, will bring the greatest satisfaction.

Kathleen Rempel Boschman and her husband, Don, work in Botswana under COM. Kathleen's home church is Hope Mennonite in Winnipeg.

Kathleen, a Commission on Overseas Mission worker, is involved in the development of health care for AIDS patients in Botswana. WM contributes to Kathleen's support.

Finding the balance

by Jeanne Rempel

I stood on the rise early that morning and could see for miles. I easily counted the few farms within sight and could also identify a distant church. As I stood alone in that field on a Mennonite farm in eastern Washington, the wind my only companion, I thought of the pioneer Mennonite women who helped settle this place and how they must have depended on Sunday services and women's meetings for their faith and mission understandings and their social sustenance. Isolated geographically, perhaps lonely, the church was their lifeblood.

In strong contrast is the early morning scene that greets me daily in Southern California. Homeowners attempt to mask the tract-like sameness of the houses all around us. The sound of cars starting up and driving off predominates, mixed in with the sound of trucks stopping and then roaring away at traffic lights. The occasional car alarm goes off in the massive apartment complex behind us, mixed in with the twitters of sparrows and cawing of crows. Among the children's extracurricular and school activities, the movie houses that offer a dozen choices, the video stores that offer hundreds, the places to eat and places to shop, the Women in Mission group too easily becomes just one more choice.

Two extremes in living situations: Most of you find yourself somewhere in the middle, trying to live meaningfully without being over-involved, but being called by the church and WM and many other worthwhile organizations, asking for your involvement. How do we pick and choose? How does the church or the WM group stand a chance in relation to a polished, high-technology world? What is faithfulness to Christ?

It is our task to learn to listen to what God calls us to, to walk the tightrope of living in this world without being of this world. We cannot do this alone. Our WM groups and our churches need to be places of listening and studying, of shelter and healing, of speaking a language so that women (and men) can understand what it means to follow Jesus when the road is full with the obstacles of busyness and financial pressure and possessions. How is your WM group doing that for the women and men in your community?

Jeanne Rempel, WM president, lives in Upland, Calif., with her husband and three children. Peace Fellowship, where Jeanne is part-time pastor, is their church community.

ROUNDTABLE

by Susan Jantzen

Susan Jantzen is coordinator of WM and lives in Newton with her husband, Jim, and sons, Peter and Robert.

"Women in Mission's hosting of the Taiwanese Women's Choir 16 years ago still makes an impact on the Mennonite church in Taiwan," Janet Sprunger reported at our March WM Mission Worker Banquet in Newton, Kan. Janet and her husband, Hugh, the first General Conference mission workers appointed to Taiwan, returned to the 40th anniversary celebration of the Taiwanese Mennonite church this past February.

After Mennonite World Conference in 1978, WM chartered a bus for the women's choir and provided lodging as they traveled around the United States and Canada. "The Taiwanese women were fascinated to see a farm and ride a tractor, to see a retirement home."

Now the women have one floor of their 12-story church building for care of older people. The women also cook meals and take them out to the apartments of older people. "These women provide a vision to other mainline congregations in Taiwan that do not have the emphasis of blending faith with service," said Sprunger.

* * * *

In March, Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., turned in 1,197,175 labels to the Campbell's Soup Co. to purchase:

a new 15-passenger van,
Tandy 250 SX computer,
Panasonic TV/VCR,
a "Carmen San Diego" social studies computer program and
"Math Blaster" math computer program

These much-needed items will help in teaching and learning. The van is needed because dependable transportation in this isolated area is important for school and after-school programs. School programs include picking children up at home, and field trips to areas beyond the reservation. After-school participation in the Hopi Elementary Athletic League requires transportation to other Hopi schools.

Thousands of women across the United States and Canada collected the labels. "I expect that every time someone cut a label they were thinking of the school, often sharing a prayer for Hopi Mission School. We sense God's blessing because of supporters' intervention for Hopi Mission School," wrote Don Diller, Hopi Mission School principal.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Thirteen area-wide women's gatherings were held this past spring as a part of Women in Mission activities. A list of topics and regions follows as a resource for you.

- **British Columbia** women reflected on "Portraits of God's grace."
- **Alberta**'s gathering spent time sharing about the General Conference International Learning Visit to Colombia.
- **Saskatchewan** women enjoyed "God's love—sharing the vision," using John 15:17 as their key verse.
- **Manitoba**'s topic was "Is my flame burning?" Matthew 5:15-16 were key verses.
- **Ontario**'s Enrichment Day featured a dramatist's portrayal of the Mary-Martha story and the theme "Serve the Lord with gladness." Ontario's spring meeting provided a look at years of Mennonite Central Committee work in Indonesia.
- **Oregon** women focused on General Conference work in Botswana.
- **Washington**'s meeting explored the "Cycle of loss to joy."
- **Nebraska** held a joint WM/WMSC gathering on the topic "Unity of spirit through a bond of peace," with Ephesians 4:3 as the key verse.
- **Oklahoma** also held a joint WM/WMSC meeting with a focus on "Portrait of a devout woman."
- **Indiana**'s gathering encompassed Mennonite mission work: "Christian seminars for African women" and "Religious life at Bluffton College."
- **Pennsylvania** women heard about "Life in Bangladesh with MCC."

Your Giving	**1993**		**1994**	
Feb.-May	$69,942	37.8%	$52,440	28.3%

Thank you for your contributions to the church and to Women in Mission!

WINDOW SHOPPING

The generosity of women continues to be a tremendous asset to the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. On behalf of the General Conference, I applaud Women in Mission for your generous giving in 1993. You exceeded your goal by giving $202,857.85!

Thank you for your efforts!
Vern Preheim, general secretary

One of the Central District WM projects is the Chicago Mennonite Learning Center. Three teachers from the school were invited to speak at their WM banquet. The table decorations were chalk, erasers and other school supplies, which were later presented to the teachers for the school.

FORECAST Integration? Cooperation? What might integration mean for your group. In our next issue we will explore integration in Ontario and Pacific District and the current experiences of those groups.

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt.

What about closer to home?

Over in the Middle East, a gunman went berserk and shot up a mosque. It was front-page news. Mennonite Central Committee is giving $20,000 to pay for trauma counseling for the survivors (May 10 issue, page 16). A counselor training program is also being started.

Closer to home, a woman in my church teaches in a Chicago grade school. Most of her students know someone who's been shot and killed. Cars line up in front every day to buy drugs. Gunfire is common. One day the children were kept in longer so that police could remove a dead body from the street. Stray bullets make recess impossible. One of her students was burned to death. This school has no counselors at all. Maybe MCC would like to give $20,000 to help these little survivors, too? *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*

The voiceless unborn

We were glad to see the article in the May 10 issue on health-care reform in the United States but found it lacking discussion of a crucial concern to the Christian community.

Willard Krabill powerfully reminds us that we must be the voice for the voiceless, speak up for the poor and be alert to the plight of the powerless. Who is more powerless, more helpless, more voiceless than an unborn child?

God has invested all his love in creating a human life. That is why we are not entitled to destroy it, especially we who know that Christ has died for the salvation of that life. Christ has died and given everything for that life.

The Clinton administration's national health-care plan will mandate the public funding of abortion on demand, an abortion that would take the very life that Jesus died for. A small human being will be deprived of love even before birth. The child will die because she is not wanted.

Jesus bore unspeakable suffering because he loves us. This unborn child bears it because we will not speak up for her.

One day, however, we will have to meet the Lord of the universe. What will we tell him about that child who came naked and poor? We did not clothe her nor did we feed her, but our tax dollars did pay to end her life.

Life is the greatest gift of God to human beings, for we have been created in the image of God. Life belongs to God, and we have no right to destroy it. Neither should we pay for the destruction of an innocent human life.

The challenge of the church is to speak up and work for a health-care system that truly cares for all of our sisters and brothers, even the voiceless and helpless unborn. *Cathy and Joe Tonan, Claremont, Calif.*

Ideas your church can try

The youth at Hereford Mennonite Church in Bally, Pa., did babysitting from 5 to 8 p.m. one Saturday. This was so well received that they offered the service again. The youth accepted donations for the service.

Sherbrooke Mennonite Church in Vancouver and Cornerstone Church—Mennonite in Saskatoon include encouragement/appreciation cards with their bulletins. These are designed for writing notes to other members in the church.

Send your ideas to The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Simplify confession of faith

In late December or early January I received a copy of the proposed Confession of Faith. The other day a group of us completed our review of the document. I guess if you want a document that basically outlines where the GCs [General Conference Mennonite Church] and the MCs [Mennonite Church] are today, perhaps it helps us in that area. The preamble suggests that it might be used for instruction and for conversation with other Christian groups. Maybe, if you are talking of graduate students or other, equally sophisticated groups.

When I received my copy and looked at it I was almost immediately turned off. Forty pages (38 of text). Is this a confession of faith or is it a graduate course in Anabaptist theology? One person who looked at it said, "I haven't got the time to try to figure out what this means." Another commented he thought a confession of faith was a one-page statement briefly and succinctly outlining our faith. He was lost reading this. Certainly we can't give this to seekers to help them understand what we are about.

Granted, we had several theological students in our group who were absolutely delighted with some of what was being said. At the same time we all wondered if a simpler, less pedantic style could not have been used. It was obviously not written with the majority of our members in mind.

My suggestion to the writers is to go back and simplify, simplify, simplify. Condense those 38 pages of text to one or two pages. Then we'll have something that will be of value for the total church. *Jake Nickel, Saskatoon*

Phi. on editors

When I read my article, "Jesus We Know, But Who Are You?" (May 10 issue, page 12), I immediately noticed a reference to Philemon 3. My first instinct was to check my manuscript to see whether I had made the error; I discovered that I had used the abbreviated form Phi. 3:10-11. My next thought was that in the process of deciding whether "Phi" might refer to Philemon or Philippians the editorial staff forgot to verify the number of chapters in these two letters from Paul. Then I realized that this must have been a subtle editorial tactic to test whether the readers of *The Mennonite* ignore the letters of Paul. If they do, no one will have noticed that the text I had in mind was Philippians 3:10-11.

I assume that none of your readers will have concluded that some enterprising New Testament professor at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary has recently discovered a longer version of the epistle to Philemon. *Jacob W. Elias, associate professor of New Testament, AMBS, Elkhart, Ind.*

Editor's note: *You're right. Sure. That's what we meant. Yeah. Uh-huh.*

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Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity. Send correspondence to* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

What makes churches grow?

Face-to-face groups have tremendous potential for shaping the life and growth of the church.

Palmer Becker

A study called "Let's Face It" reveals that spiritual and numerical growth are most clearly related to the number and quality of face-to-face groups in a congregation.

In a face-to-face group, members bear each other's burdens, pray for each other and make the presence of God real for one another. Outsiders who visit the group see and feel the dynamics of God's Spirit at work. The result is similar to Acts 2, in which the Christians were "enjoying the goodwill of all the people, and every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved" (verse 47).

During the Reformation it was the Anabaptists who experienced the most growth, first spiritually, then numerically. They did not have the great cathedrals or clergy or music and drama programs of the established church. But they did have face-to-face groups. In fact, they were forced to be in face-to-face groups.

As scholars have reassessed our Mennonite history and identity, they have given considerable attention to our theology but not to our form. I suggest that the uniqueness of both the early church and the Anabaptist movement was as much in its form as in its theology.

The uniqueness of both the early church and the Anabaptist movement was as much in its form as in its theology.

Something unique happens when people meet together in face-to-face groups. The worth of each person is recognized. Participants know they belong. They experience acceptance, fellowship and a sense of well-being. Scriptures and prayers become relevant for the immediate situation. And members are given the strength they need to better live their faith in the world.

Pastor Takashi Yamada of Japan says, "The uniqueness of the Anabaptist movement was that the members confronted each other in their groups in ways that gave them strength to confront the world." Face-to-face groups are in effect peer groups that have tremendous potential for shaping the lives of individuals and for affecting their relationships with neighbors and co-workers.

Face-to-face or care groups are the way to go for both quality and quantity. Small-group ministry will both take Mennonites to their roots and take them into a special future.

Palmer Becker has recently resigned as pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church in Mountain Lake, Minn. He is the author of Called to Care *and* Called to Equip, *guides for small groups in the church.*

How to begin a small group

1 Invite a few others—as many as seven—for an evening of fellowship, indicating that you would like to talk about starting a small group for the purpose of either fellowship, Bible study, prayer or a special project.

2 Have a time of fellowship. Serve a cup of coffee, then begin discussion by indicating that you would be willing to serve as convener or leader of a group for the next two months. Ask the group, "If we would meet together regularly, what would be the purpose of our coming together?" Agree on a purpose and a possible schedule, such as:

- refreshments and a discussion topic (30 minutes),
- Bible study in dialogical form (30 minutes),
- sharing from and prayer for each person in the group (30 minutes).

3 Discuss and agree on housekeeping details. Where will you meet? At what time? How often? What will you study? Have available some study materials.

4 Before you conclude, agree on a covenant. It might include the following:

- We will meet regularly. If for some reason one of us needs to be absent, we will call the leader or the host to let them know what is happening.
- We will be available for one another. If a member has a need and one of us has a resource, we will seek to meet that need.
- We will maintain confidentiality. Any personal information shared in the group will not be shared outside the group.
- We will keep our pastor informed. Our leader will meet regularly with the pastor so that he or she can give and receive counsel.

5 Read *Called to Care: A Training Manual for Small-Group Leaders* (Herald Press, 1993). It will tell how to recruit and lead a group that has a healthy emphasis on fellowship, Bible study, sharing and prayer/worship. A video, "Called to Lead," is being prepared. *Palmer Becker*

Chinese church outlasts oppressive past

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—When the Mennonite mission church in Puyang, China, was closed down by the government in the late 1940s, member Zhang Baoshan continued to hold worship services in his parents' home.

For decades, even during the worst periods of the Cultural Revolution, about 10 people regularly met there on Sundays. They used one or two Bibles that were kept hidden for the remainder of the week. Sometimes up to 40 people were present.

Roland and Sophie Brown, North Newton, Kan., and Todd Friesen, China Educational Exchange worker, heard these and other stories when they visited former Mennonite churches in Puyang and Daming May 5-14. When Friesen and another CEE worker established contact with these churches last November, it was the first time North Americans had significant contact since the churches were closed.

The trip gave Roland the opportunity to visit church members he had not seen since he was a child. Roland's parents, Henry and Maria Brown, were the first Mennonites to arrive in Puyang in 1911. During a previous trip to China in 1982, Roland only was allowed to look at the church buildings, and Sophie was not permitted to travel to that area.

Welcomed: Roland and Sophie were the honored guests at the Sunday service at the church in Puyang, now known as the Gospel Church. Elder Wang Ji'an remembered the commitment of Roland's father to bringing the gospel to that part of China.

"He came in peace" from far distances, Wang said. "Pastor Brown was not afraid of distances." Later, he said, "we'll all be able to meet in heaven."

When the service ended, the Browns were surrounded by people, who greeted them at the front of the church. Of the more than 450 people who attended the service, the majority were women.

"They wanted to get close and touch us. They wanted to hold our hands. It was a good feeling," said Sophie.

Roland's parents never thought the Mennonite churches would cease to exist, even though they did not hear any news from China after they left in 1949. Still, Roland thinks, if his parents were alive, they would be surprised by the rapid growth of Christianity in China. Before 1949, Gospel Church members said, there were 1,000 Christians in the Puyang area; today there are about 6,000 Christians.

"In difficult times, people find strength in the church," said Roland. "Many, particularly young people, feel communism is bankrupt."

Churches in China identify themselves as Catholic or Protestant; the majority are not affiliated with a

Roland Brown

Overflowing church: *About 450 people gathered at the Gospel Church in Puyang, China, for a worship service at which Roland and Sophie Brown, North Newton, Kan., were honored guests. The majority of the members are poor; the average weekly offering is $13.*

Inside the news

British Columbia conference reaches out to youth / p. 16

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary graduates 24 / p. 17

Cheyenne Mennonite church celebrates faith and language / p. 18

Credit union specialists from Canada, the United States and Russia spent a week in Moscow sharing insights on how to start and run credit unions and cooperatives. The May 23-27 event, planned by Mennonite Economic Development Associates and its partner, the Moscow-based Association of Christians in Business, drew 40 Russian participants.

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Emmaus Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan., voted June 1 to withdraw from the General Conference Mennonite Church, citing theological differences. "Separating from a conference that we have been a part of for over 100 years was not an easy decision," said a letter from church officers addressed to GCMC general secretary Vern Preheim. The letter also noted that the church will continue to take offerings for the Commission on Overseas Mission and other General Conference ministries. The church simultaneously withdrew from the Western District Conference.

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Mennonites in two communities were murdered in the last two months. About 1,200 people attended a May 25 funeral for Rhonda Krehbiel, 36, at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan. Krehbiel was beaten to death in her home the afternoon of May 20. Investigators continue to search for leads on the murderer. In Markham, Ill., Odell Segers, 58, of Markham Community Mennonite Church was shot and killed April 8 in a robbery at his place of business. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

A record 188 graduating seniors went through Bluffton (Ohio) College's commencement May 29. The Most Reverend Walter Paul Khotso Makhulu, archbishop of the Anglican Church of Central Africa, talked on "Gradation, Graduation and Engagement ... A Challenge." "I know that your knowledge has increased. I hope your wisdom has increased also," he said. "I hope you will seek the truth, that you will apply yourselves toward building a brighter future."

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"Connecting Families," the fifth annual retreat planned by and for Mennonite and Church of the Brethren parents of lesbians, gays and bisexuals, was held at Laurelville (Pa.) Mennonite Church Center in early April. The event centered around the theme "Our Jericho Road ... Where Faith and Compassion Heal the Brokenhearted." Nearly 60 people participated. A sixth retreat is planned for March 31-April 2, 1995, at Laurelville. Contact Brethren/Mennonite Parents, P.O. Box 1708, Lima, OH 45802, or Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Route 5, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666.

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Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary president Marlin E. Miller outlined the key issues for the seminary at board meetings May 19-21 in Elkhart, Ind. "Student recruitment is the most important institutional strategic issue for the next two years, and likely for the next three or four years," he said. He said building financial support and implementing curriculum changes have good momentum, but "the momentum for student recruitment and enrollments needs to be changed." The board struggled with the balance between on-campus and off-campus theological education, recognizing benefits to making classes accessible to more people but fearing the loss of the community experience gained by attending full time in Elkhart.

Roland Brown

Out of oppression: *Zhang Baoshan recalls how church members faced pressures in the past. Some were killed during the criticism campaigns that swept China during the 1950s, he said. Zhang spent three years in "education by labor" during the Cultural Revolution. Another church member, Wang Ji'an, spent seven years in a labor camp. Today Zhang is a leader of the Gospel Church in Puyang, a businessman and political representative for all religions.*

denomination. However, Roland sees Mennonite distinctives such as a congregational approach in the Puyang and Daming churches. Zhang said he refused to accept a seminary graduate for a position in the Gospel Church because the graduate did not have a Mennonite background.

Most members in Puyang and Daming are poor. They find it hard to provide financial support to their pastors. For example, Liu Yuwen, pastor of the Three-Self Church in Daming, does not receive a salary from the church; his family supports him. Liu bikes 10 miles to get from home to the church.

The Browns, who were longtime Mennonite missionaries in Taiwan, said the situation in Puyang and Daming reminded them of Taiwan in the mid-1950s. "People were relaxed. There was no great hurry," said Sophie. "In Taiwan, people are now so bound up in getting money."

The Commission on Overseas Mission has sent money to help with church building repairs in Daming and Puyang. Members are fixing damage from the time when the government owned the buildings. Both churches have been unable to fix leaky roofs due to costs. *Carla Reimer*

British Columbia conference involves youth

Richmond, B.C. (GCMC)—"Are you willing to risk? Are you willing to step out of your comfort zone? That is the message God is teaching me," said Tyler Brown during a testimony about his experience in Kenya at the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia here June 3-4.

Brown, of Bethel Mennonite Church, Aldergrove, B.C., was one of many young people who shared their faith as part of an emphasis on young people at the annual sessions of CMinBC at Peace Mennonite Church here.

Brazil's church full of youth

Curitiba, Brazil (GCMC)—Ana Luiza Neufeld knows how to involve youth.

"They form so much of our membership," says Neufeld, a regional leader in the Association of Evangelical Mennonites here. "We need to give them opportunities to serve because in a few years they will be leading our churches."

AEM leaders are always looking for youth leaders, says Gerson da Rocha, a regional youth president from Curitiba.

An all-day conference on "The Biblical Patterns for the Mission of the Church" in Palmeira shows their effectiveness. Over 50 percent of the attendees were between ages 14 and 25.

Angela Cristina de Sa attends a church near Campinas. She estimates about 30 percent of the 300 members are between age 16 and 30.

As a result, the youth are heavily involved in planning Sunday worship services, which typically last three hours. They meet every two weeks in small groups and sometimes hold evangelistic campaigns on Saturdays.

"Jesus fills a void that nothing else can fill," says de Sa. *Carla Reimer*

Some delegates appeared to have stepped out of their "comfort zone" as they listened to original music by a number of CMinBC young people. The songs, written for a competition sponsored by CMinBC, focused on the conference theme: "Each One Reach One."

Featured speaker Don Posterski , vice president of national programs for World Vision Canada, commended the young people for their gifts. He said he was glad to see the diversity of ages represented at the conference, noting that this was not the case at the Living in Faithful Evangelism conference that preceded the CMinBC sessions.

Throughout his presentation, Posterski challenged adults and young people alike to adopt the posture found in the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi: "Grant that I may not so much seek to be understood as to understand."

Still, he placed responsibility on the older generation to carve out a faith that is "adequate and attractive" to the younger generation. Often, he said, the church has made the fatal mistake of assuming that young people "will come back when they have children. Guess what? They didn't.

"We need to avoid treating young people as the future of the church. Charlie Brown once said, 'Having potential is a heavy burden to bear.'"

He also encouraged CMinBC to give young people the chance to determine

Seminary graduates 24

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—With strains of the South African hymn "We Are Walking in the Light of God" echoing through College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., graduates of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary claimed their diplomas.

In his address at the May 20 commencement honoring the 24 graduates, Stanley Green said, "Go forward with hope; he who has conquered sin and death goes before you in your pilgrimage." Green is the new president of Mennonite Board of Missions.

A native of South Africa, Green was introduced as "an overseas missionary to North America." His message, "A Subversive Vocation in an Age of Cynicism," called graduates to counter the growing hopelessness in the world by pointing people to Jesus. "There will be many times in the ministry to which God has called you when you will be overwhelmed by the pain and suffering of people," Green said. "You must hold before yourself and the community the stories of forebears who have encountered the power of God to transform their circumstances and their own lives."

Light of God: *For the commencement service the T. Hadley Inspirational Choir from the Canaan Baptist Church in Elkhart, Ind., joined the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary choir. They sang several African-American hymns, asking the audience to join in.*

J. Tyler Klassen

The Mennonite Brethren biennial convention will meet July 23-26 in Colorado Springs. Conventioneers will vote on a proposal, "Mission USA," to foster renewal and church planting. They will also vote on a recommendation to phase out the guaranteed subsidy for the MB Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif. (*The Christian Leader*)

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Mennonite productions won awards at the Religious Public Relations Council (RPRC) annual convention in Birmingham, Ala., April 7-10. "Beyond the News: Sexual Abuse" received an Award of Excellence in the documentary/educational video category and also a "Best of Class" award for its treatment of the topic of sexual abuse. The "Being a Man" radio spots also won an Award of Excellence in radio. The series consists of 10, 30-second spots featuring the comedy duo Ted Swartz and Lee Eshleman and was produced by Jerry Holsopple. Both award winners were produced by Mennonite Board of Missions Media Ministries in Harrisonburg, Va.

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Ezra Sigwela, longtime co-worker with Mennonites in South Africa, asked North American Mennonites for prayer. Sigwela is the newly appointed Cabinet Minister for South Africa's Eastern Cape province. He requested prayer June 5 through Gary and Jean Isaac and Bob and Nelda Thelin, Mennonite missionaries in South Africa. Sigwela has studied at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind. He says he is overwhelmed by responsibilities that include paring down the bureaucracies of the former homelands of Ciskei and Transkei and building a new single administration for the province. Ezra and his wife, Zuki, are having a hard time adjusting to having security guards. Ezra compared the situation to his old one as a political prisoner for 10 years on South Africa's Robben Island, with its many guards.

Beginning when the Gulf War started, members of Oak Park (Ill.) Mennonite Church are voluntarily taxing their gasoline use. Each month a special Peace Tax offering is taken. The several thousand dollars raised have gone to peace efforts in the Middle East and around the world. This money is over and above the general funds that the church budgets each year for mission and service. Each month, during a potluck meal, members are encouraged to write to government leaders.

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Saturday evening and no place to go? Members of Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., decided to do something new and organized a Saturday evening coffeehouse, reports the *Gospel Evangel*. The first was held March 19 with acoustic musicians Wilma Harder and Brad Yoder performing. The second, held May 21, featured Jude and Doug Krehbiel, the Road Less Traveled music group. The artists donate their talents, and admission goes to community causes. (*Gospel Herald*)

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Joe Dueck, a student at Briercrest Bible Institute, Moose Jaw, Sask., is giving up his youth work to serve as a peacekeeper in Bosnia for seven months. The 20-year-old has been training as a reservist since last September, along with Wes Friesen, who is heading for Croatia. "I've always wanted to do something on a political level," Dueck said in the Moose Jaw *Times Herald*. "It's the patriotism that keeps us going," he said. "We're there to do some good in the world, to provide aid for civilian authorities." The youth drop-in center he has been operating will be closed while he is gone. He plans to be a youth pastor when he returns. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

What young adults want

Mt. Pleasant, Pa. (GCMC/MC)—Churches need to change, said Dawn Ranck at a gathering here on young adult issues May 12-14. "Ministry cannot continue to be done the way it has always been done, said Ranck, of Lancaster, Pa. "We are a different breed."

In study sessions, attendees forged the following questions and responses as a message to the wider church:

• What is your experience of being a young adult in the church?

Many young adults have positive church experiences because of lasting relationships. Yet many also have experienced loneliness and isolation when the church is unable to respond to changing needs.

• What are your needs and wants from the church?

Young adults want to participate in congregational life. They want congregations that meet their needs and offer a safe place to foster a dialogue of faith.

• How can young adults have a voice in the church?

Young adults recognize the need to participate and speak up. At the same time, congregations need to find ways to validate and advocate for young adults.

• How can we help the church to become listening and helping?

Allow the church to be a safe place for all to share their laments. Young adults need the church to allow others to know them and walk with them.

The meeting was planned by the Young Adult Reference Council (General Conference Mennonite Church) and the Young Adult Network (Mennonite Church).

10 percent of the conference budget: "Money is power. Only good will come out of this."

Delegates passed a 1995 budget of $610,981, a 3 percent increase over the 1994 budget. The new budget calls for $388,000 in donations from churches. In approving the 1995 budget, delegates asked that more details come to churches by fall about the $225,586 that the evangelism and church development committee will receive. CMinBC received $683,352 or 99 percent of its 1993 budget.

In other action, the delegates accepted the 22-member Living Hope Christian Fellowship in Surrey as a member congregation and elected Larry Schram, Kelowna Gospel Fellowship, as vice chair. *Carla Reimer*

Cheyenne church celebrates Christian faith and native tongue

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church, Busby, Mont., takes pride in both its Mennonite faith and its Cheyenne language. Members and friends gathered to celebrate the church's 90th anniversary May 11-15.

Pastor Willis Busenitz noted that "a significant contribution that the Mennonite church brought here is a strong emphasis on the native language. We as a church have had a philosophy that sees language as a part of who a person is. This is important in a day when the number of people who speak the native language is declining."

The White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church and the other two Cheyenne Mennonite churches in Montana work together with Wycliffe translators on projects such as producing Cheyenne language tapes of the Scripture and an annual bilingual calendar. They also are working on an updated translation of portions of the Bible. The last translation of the New Testament and portions of the Old Testament was completed by Mennonite missionary Rodolphe Petter in 1934.

David Graber, Hardin, Mont., led the group in Cheyenne songs. Graber was instrumental in helping compile a Cheyenne language songbook, which was printed in 1982.

Three former pastoral couples—Malcolm and Esther Wenger, Newton, Kan., Walter and Marie Dirks, Fort Saint John, B.C., and Pat and Jan McFarren, Bloomfield, Mont.—attended the celebration and shared reflections about their years of service.

Lighthouse: The Mennonite church

Celebrating the church: *(From left) Willis Busenitz, Malcolm Wenger and Walter and Ron Dirks visit at White River Cheyenne's 90th anniversary.*

has "been a lighthouse in the community" because of the way it has brought word and deed together, said Busenitz. He noted that in the area of alcoholism and other chemical dependencies, the Mennonite church has seen the importance of commitment to church and God but at the same time has not shunned tools such as self-help groups and counseling. The White River Cheyenne Church has a chemical dependency fund to help family members of alcoholics who are receiving rehabilitative services. The fund is open to church and community members.

"There continues to be deep appreciation for the General Conference involvement here, for the way the Commission on Home Ministries has stood alongside [us]," said Busenitz. CHM provides financial support to the church through the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council, which includes $3,000 a year for Cheyenne language projects.
Carla Reimer

Emmanuel Mennonite Church of Winkler, Man., is looking for a full-time **leading pastor**. Starting time is negotiable.

Please send resumé to **Pastoral Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 960 Pembina Ave., Winkler, MB R6W 1X4.**

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **video producer** (Akron, Pa.). This salaried position is available Sept. 1. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have at least six years experience in actual video production as well as overseeing video production; must be committed to teamwork, "more with less" productions and able to juggle multiple productions simultaneously.

Interested people in the United States contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 South 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, Pa. 17501-0500, (717) 859-1151**. Applications due **July 15**.

Goshen College announces an opening for a **writing program director**. Responsibilities include beginning and operating a writing center and assisting faculty in implementing a Writing Across the Curriculum program in 1995-96. M.A. or Ph.D. in rhetoric or composition or related field desired, with writing center experience preferred. This position is half time for 1994-95 with the possibility of additional teaching assignments. Application deadline June 22 or until position is filled. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application and résumé to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.**

Half-time faculty position in **pastoral care and counseling, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary**, to be filled by July 1, 1995. Candidates should be able to be certified with the American Association of Pastoral Counselors and the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education. Preference will be given to people with Mennonite affiliation. Women are especially encouraged to apply.

Send a letter of application, resumé and references by **Aug. 15** to **Gayle Gerber Koontz, Dean, AMBS, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, IN 46517-1999, (219) 295-3726.** AMBS is an equal opportunity employer.

Eastern Mennonite College invites applications for the following:

- **Faculty position in business:** Full-time beginning this fall. Teaching responsibilities in business administration and management. Ph.D. in business or related field and experience in business preferred.

- **Faculty position in physical education/athletics:** Full-time beginning this fall. Teaching and coaching responsibilities (women's volleyball and another Division III sport. Doctorate preferred; master's degree required.

For more information contact **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite College & Seminary, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.**

Teachers for missionary children in Burkina Faso: The children of Mennonite missionaries in Burkina Faso will need new teachers for the 1995-96 school year. Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, the cooperative mission of six Mennonite denominations, has several families serving in this West African country. Presently seven children grades 3 to 8 attend the school in Orodara. They need trained and experienced teachers willing to serve at least two years in this setting. Necessary language training will be provided.

For more information, contact the mission agency of your Mennonite denomination: **Commission on Overseas Mission**, General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100; **Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission**, 59466 County Road 113, Elkhart, IN 46517, (219) 875-5552.

Director of Enrollment Management, Eastern Mennonite College & Seminary. 12-month, full-time, cabinet- level position reporting to the president. Supervises directors of admissions, financial assistance, information systems, summer programs and continuing education. The director is responsible for coordinating retention activities, institutional and market research, market planning, and educating and motivating all people at Eastern Mennonite concerning the importance of their role in student recruitment and retention. Doctoral degree preferred, master's degree required. Must be able to provide evidence of administrative, supervisory and computer technology skills; knowledge of marketing and institutional imaging important; commitment to Mennonite education and Mennonite faith and practice required. Minorities especially encouraged to apply.

If interested, please contact **President's Office, EMC&S, Harrisonburg, VA 22801, (703) 432-4100.**

Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, invites applications for a full-time **leading minister** to begin Sept. 1, 1995. Bethel is a conference-affiliated church with a membership of 600. The congregation would benefit from a pastor having team ministry experience, good communication skills and strength in preaching. Mennonite seminary training preferred. All applications will be confidential.

Please send resumés to: **Jim Wiens, Chair, Search Committee, 362 Lindenwood Drive West, Winnipeg, MB R3P 2B1**.

Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., is seeking a **full-time, associate-level pastor** whose role in a three-person pastoral team will emphasize ministry to youth, young adults and young families through all areas of ministry, including youth and young adult program development and support, preaching, worship planning, teaching and counseling/visitation. Seminary degree and service experience desirable. Beginning date in summer or fall 1994.

Send letter of inquiry and resumé or Ministerial Leadership Information Form to **Doug Penner, Pastoral Search Committee, Bethel College Mennonite Church, 2600 College Ave., North Newton, KS 67117.** Review of applications will continue until the position is filled.

Record

The Western District Conference plans to start a church in Tulsa, Okla. The Home Mission Committee of WDC has called Robert Martz of Middlebury, Ind., to begin gathering a congregation there. Robert and his wife, Sherry, and their two daughters plan to move to Tulsa by Aug. 1. The Martzes plan to use a cell church model of church planting, starting with small group meetings in homes.

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The U.S. Congress voted to continue peacetime draft registration. In a May 19 letter to Congress, President Bill Clinton pre-empted an effort by Rep. Ron Dellums, chair of the House Armed Services Committee, to end draft registration on Oct. 1. The letter told Congress "that it is essential to our national security to continue draft registration and the Selective Service System." Dellums' amendment was defeated 275-125.

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An Amish farmer, an environmental activist and three theologians will speak at "Creation Summit: Shaping an Anabaptist Theology for Living," Feb. 24-26, 1995, at the Wonderland Camp and Conference Center, Camp Lake, Wis. It is sponsored by the Joint Environmental Task Force of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. Keynote speakers are Ted Hiebert, professor, Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass.; Dorothy Jean Weaver, professor, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.; Walter Klaassen, professor emeritus, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.; environmental activist Richard Cartwright Austin from Dungannon, Va.; and David Kline, author and Amish farmer from Holmes County, Ohio. Contact Tim Lehman at (612) 721- 6697.

MINISTERS

Louis Goertz is summer interim pastor at Faith Church, Newton, Kan.

Milton Harder, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., retired June 5 after 40 years of ministry.

Bernie Kaufman is summer interim assistant pastor at Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan.

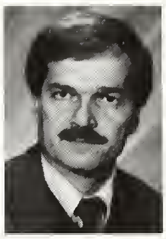
Dunn

Kathy Neufeld Dunn was ordained May 15 at Shalom Community Church, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Jerry Nussbaum was ordained May 22 at Silverwood Church, Goshen, Ind.

WORKERS

Katie Funk Wiebe, Wichita, Kan., will resign as editor of *Rejoice!*, effective Dec. 31.



Sommer

Larry Horner has been named principal and chief administrative officer of Freeman (S.D.) Academy.

Willis Sommer, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, has been named vice president of fiscal affairs at Bluffton College.

Editor for *Rejoice!*, a devotional guide serving the Mennonite constituency in North America. Quarter-time position. Responsibilities include recruiting writers for devotional material, editing and working with associate editors, overseeing printing and production, reporting to publishers. Qualifications: bachelor's degree, good knowledge of Bible and theology, experience in writing, editing and personnel management. Must be an active member of a Mennonite church and have acquaintance with the Mennonite community.

Send letter of application, resumé and your views on devotional literature to **Michael Dick, Board of Resource Ministries, #302-32025 Dahlstrom Ave., Clearbrook, BC V2T 2K7.**

Mountain View Mennonite Church, an established rural congregation nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains near Glacier National Park, is seeking a **full-time pastor.** Position open in November.

Send resumé to **Pastoral Search Committee, c/o Frieda Kauffman, 195 Two Mile Drive, Kalispell, MT 59901.**

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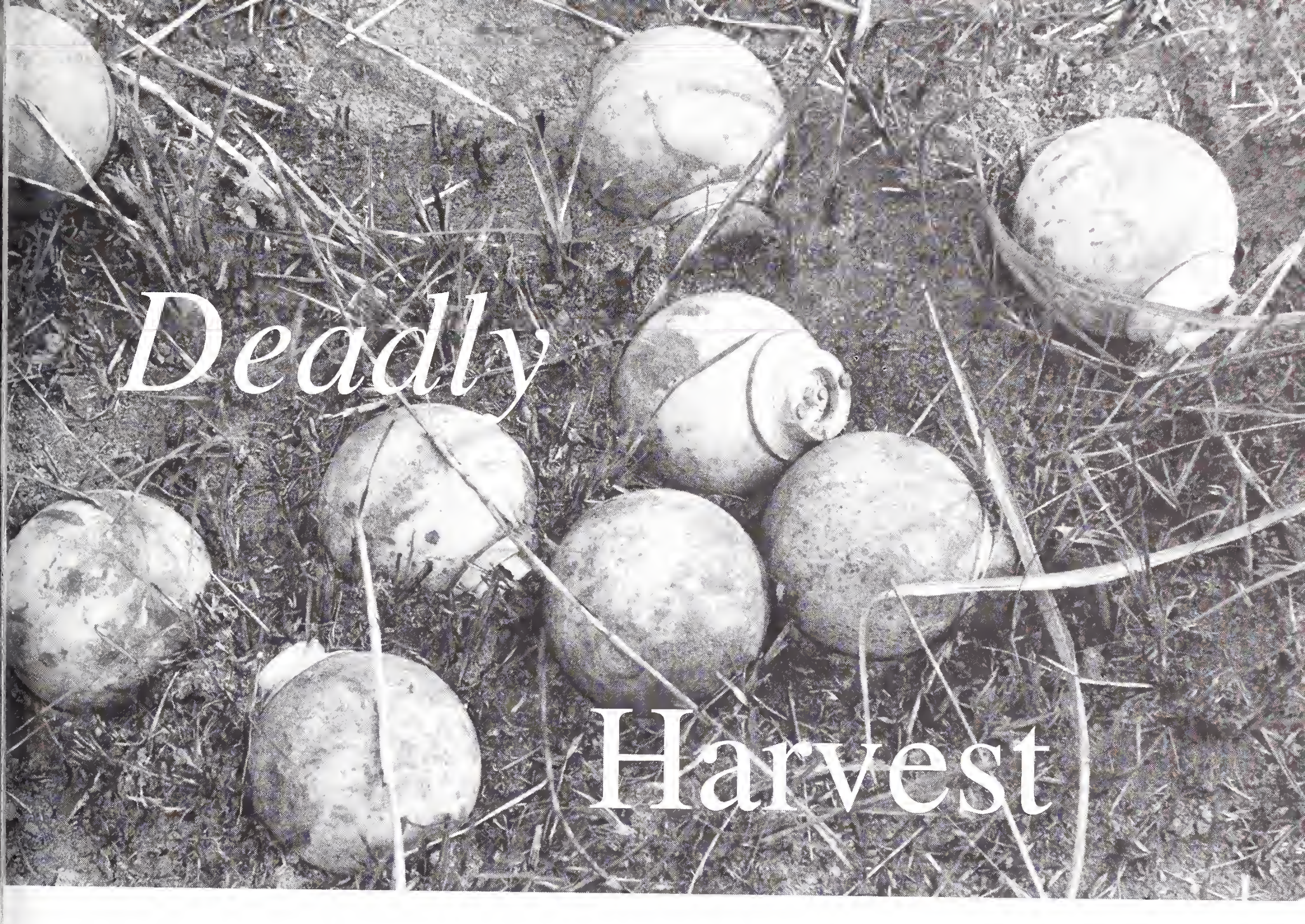

Deadly Harvest

This northern Lao field should be yielding rice. But more than 20 years ago U.S. bombers seeded the area with cluster bombs. Farmers know a swing of their hoe could detonate these still live bomblets. So this field lies fallow, part of the Vietnam War's bitter legacy.

GOD ADDS the Blessing!

To help Lao people farm without fear, MCC and a British de-mining agency are training teams of Lao to clear bombs. MCC needs $600,000 U.S./$836,237 Cdn. for this project. To help clear this land, mail a contribution marked **"713-6008"** to your nearest MCC office.

$10 U.S./$14 Cdn. pays a Lao de-miner's salary for a day
$35 U.S./$48 Cdn. provides a pair of protective goggles
$6,600 U.S./$9,199 Cdn. buys a wide-sweep electronic locator

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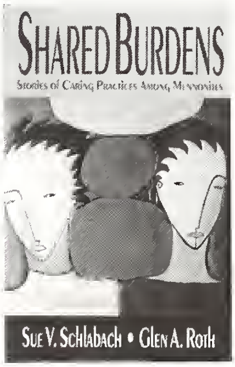
Reviews

BOOKS

Beyond barn raising

Shared Burdens: Stories of Caring Practices Among Mennonites *by Sue V. Schlabach and Glen A. Roth (Good Books, 1993, 182 pages)*

Reviewed by Janice Reusser Pauls, McPherson, Kan.


SHARED BURDENS
Stories of Caring Practices Among Mennonites
Sue V. Schlabach • Glen A. Roth

Caring and compassion among Mennonites is not a thing of the past. Even though the complexion of Mennonites has changed along with the rest of society, many still find the time to minister to the needs of their brothers and sisters in the church. In *Shared Burdens* the authors tell a few of the many stories that Mennonite families were willing to share.

The project began with a program called Sharing Programs designed to encourage children to learn to care for one another. An essay contest revealed so many wonderful stories that Roth and Schlabach decided to interview people across North America and collect additional stories to share more widely.

Mennonites have always struggled to live the love Jesus taught, making mutual aid a part of their lifestyle. Traditionally this has meant barn raising, sewing circles, Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Disaster Service projects. Time and society have changed living patterns, however, and today more Mennonites, both men and women, are in professional occupations that curtail their flexibility to respond to crises at a moment's notice. The book also deals with the new variety of "trouble" that Mennonites face today—trouble brought on by dysfunctional families, medical advances that extend life but don't remove the need for care and crises of poverty and race.

Shared Burdens relates timely stories in an interesting, easy-to-read fashion. It is a book of short stories that you can pick up and put down at leisure. The collection not only deals with the moments of healing by the church community but also relates when community failed and even contributed to the pain of its members. The variety of stories provides a point of identification for most everyone.

Was Christ black?

The Black Christ *by Kelly Brown Douglas (Orbis Books, 1994, 134 pages)*

Reviewed by Wilma Ann Bailey, Grantham, Pa.

In five chapters Kelly Brown Douglas examines the historical precursors to Black Christ ideology. Douglas looks at the stances of J. Deotis Roberts, James Cone and Albert Cleage and provides critical assessment of them from the point of view of womanist (African-American feminist) theology.

The author castigates white Christianity of the 19th century for preaching a gospel of "salvation by belief in Christ" that ignored the ministry of Jesus. This permitted Christians to justify slavery. The religion of the slaves, however, centered on a "Black Christ" or "an interpretation of Christianity that stressed the centrality of Jesus' ministry and relationship to the oppressed during his own time."

In the 20th century three concepts of the Black Christ clearly emerge. The first, that of Albert Cleage, believes that Jesus Christ was by race a black man. Cleage points to the genealogy in the Gospel of Matthew, noting African ancestors of Jesus. James Cone, Douglas writes, understands the Black Christ to be a "symbol of Jesus' existential commitments." The Black Christ is "committed to the liberation of black people." J. Deotis Roberts understands the Black Christ as being a way for black people to envision Christ. Each group needs to envision Christ in its own context.

Douglas critiques all of the above as being too narrowly focused on race. The "Black Christ" ignores other forms of oppression, such as class and economic stratification, gender and sexual preference issues. She calls for a womanist approach to Christ more holistic in its concern for social oppression.

This book provides a good introduction to the concepts of the Black Christ but it has several weaknesses. For example, the historical section does not provide enough context. She writes about slave Christianity without indicating that most slaves as far as we know were not Christian. More-

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(Lucius Annaens Seneca, 4 B.C. – 65 A.D.) – a Roman philosopher

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over, the Christianity of the slaves was more nuanced than what she describes. Malcolm X's opinion of Christ and Christianity is stated without reference to the fact that Malcolm X was a Muslim, not a Christian. His statements ought to be read in that light.

You can't be fruitful alone

Doing What Comes Spiritually *by John M. Drescher (Herald Press, 1993, 326 pages)*

Reviewed by April Yamasaki, Clearbrook, B.C.

First published in 1974 as *Spirit Fruit*, this book is really a guide to Christian living.

More devotional than academic, with more stories and real life examples than biblical exegesis, it embraces the whole fruit of the Spirit as outlined in Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." This focus on the Spirit-filled life is just as needed in the church today as it was 20 years ago.

In this revised edition, Drescher has made a number of changes that make the book especially appealing. Study groups will appreciate the questions and comments for discussion that appear every few pages. Leaders will want to refer to the brief leader's guide at the end of the book. Others will notice the more inclusive language throughout.

In the midst of these changes Drescher manages to preserve the same clarity of style, the same emphasis on practical living, the same concern for how people relate to one another. As Drescher shows again and again, "the fruit of the Spirit is produced only in relation to other people. It cannot be produced or practiced between God and us alone."

Drescher devotes a chapter to each of the nine qualities outlined, from love to self-control. That makes the book over 300 pages, but if I were to use it for group study, I'd still want to add some concluding material. As Drescher points out, the fruit of the Spirit is singular, and so a stronger conclusion to bring them together would have been helpful. Still, this is a valuable resource that I plan to recommend to the house fellowship groups in my congregation.

Resources

- **Carrying God's Light: Keep the Faith!** by Brenda Martin Hurst is the new 11-part study guide on Hebrews published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Women's Missionary and Service Commission of the Mennonite Church. Each congregation is receiving three copies in June. For more copies contact Women in Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100, $4 U.S./$5 Cdn. each.
- **Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage** has devoted its April 1994 issue to Mennonite and Brethren hymnology. Single copies available from Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602; (717) 393-9745; $8 ppd. ($8.48 for Pennsylvania residents).
- **A Little Bit of Love** by Marie E. Cutman (MecPublishing, Box 22, Morgantown, PA 19543, $12.45 paper/$17.45 hardcover U.S., includes shipping) tells the story of Ada and Ida Stoltzfus and their relief work in the Indian subcontinent 1947-1950.
- **Peace Sunday packet** is based on the inter-Mennonite statement "A Commitment to Christ's Way of Peace" and contains dramas, stories and prayers to help congregations organize intergenerational peace festivals. Order from Mennonite Central Committee, Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; or MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.
- **Beyond the News: Homelessness** reminds us homelessness isn't going away and suggests ways churches can do something. Includes study guide. Contact MBM Media Ministries, (800) 999-3534; $24.95 U.S./$34.95 Cdn.
- **Traces of Treasure: Quest for God in the Commonplace** by Joanne Lehman (Herald Press, 1994, $7.95 U.S./$10.95 Cdn.) offers reflections on the spiritual dimensions of common events.
- **Resources on Laos** available from your nearest MCC office: **The Past Is Present** is a 7-minute video telling how Mennonite Central Committee and Mines Advisory Group are training northern Laotian villagers to locate and explode bombies safely. **The Innocent** is an 18-minute video looking at the question of personal responsibility for violence and suffering due to war. It is based on a true story of a Laotian woman who was killed when her hoe struck a bomb dropped by the United States during the Vietnam War. **Asia Resource Box** teaches children about Laos and Thailand. Contains teacher's guides, books, games, items from Laos and a two-part video.
- **For Such a Time as This** is a 19-minute video on the church in Hong Kong and the challenges of church planting there. Includes study guide. Available from the Commission on Overseas Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, $10 U.S.
- **Enter the River: Healing Steps from White Privilege Toward Racial Reconciliation** by Jody Miller Shearer (Herald Press, 1994, $11.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.) calls the church to offer power not only to white people but to all people.
- **Prayers of an Omega** by Katie Funk Wiebe (Herald Press, 1994, $6.95 U.S./$9.25 Cdn.) is a collection of prayers that do not deny the realities of growing older but celebrate the strengthening of the inner life.
- **Mennonite Peacemaking: From Quietism to Activism** by Leo Driedger and Donald B. Kraybill (Herald Press, 1994, $14.95 U.S./$19.50 Cdn.) documents the shift among 20th-century Mennonites from passive nonresistance to participation in the political order.
- **From Martyr to Muppy**, edited by Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra and Piet Visser (International Book Distributors, 24 Hudson St., Kinderhook, NY 12106; $29.50 U.S.), is a historical introduction to the cultural assimilation processes of Mennonites in the Netherlands.
- **Anabaptist/Mennonite Faith and Economics**, edited by Calvin Redekop, Victor A. Krahn and Samuel J. Steiner (University Press of America, 1994, $33 U.S.) addresses the continuing conflict between the Anabaptist/Mennonite community and the industrial culture of today's world.
- **Joy Through the Night** by Aída Besançon Spencer and William David Spencer (InterVarsity, 1994, $11.99 U.S.) offers a biblical study on suffering, with help on how to cope with suffering and how to care for those who suffer.

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Editorial

Face to face

We like to talk about evangelism and church growth. Or we carry pictures in our minds of what a good church might be like. Or we may feel comfortable with the way things are, as long as we are not bothered too much.

But how serious are we about being a faithful church? Christa Giesbrecht (see the story on page 8) recalls hearing a lot about evangelism but not seeing it happen much at all. Later she had to decide for herself how serious she was about it. She took the risk, and it led to a close friendship with Denise Venturato.

Church doesn't just happen. It takes getting involved in each other's lives. It involves getting to know others and letting them know us. It means getting out of any cocoon we may have built around ourselves and meeting others face to face.

Such an approach is a radical departure from our culture's obsession with privatization. Going against the grain is not easy. First, we have to admit how affected each of us is by the movement of our society toward making each person's home a kingdom unto itself. Next we must, like Christa, reach out to someone.

We need to be open to the movement of God's Spirit, to let fresh ways of being the church take shape.

Part of the church's task, as this issue on the cell church movement points out, is helping people do this reaching out. The genius of cell groups is that they get people together on a more intimate level than is possible in a large Sunday morning gathering. As we learn to know others who are committed to Christ, we build trust. Soon we have the courage to risk telling these new friends about our needs, and we gain the skills to listen empathetically to their needs. As love grows, so grows the desire to include others.

Many people involved in cell churches see them as the answer to everything or as the one true way to be church. This is understandable. When people discover something new that works, it is easy to make it an absolute.

When I became involved in an intentional community, I saw our church as one that took the Book of Acts seriously because we "had all things in common" (Acts 2:44). I still believe that such an approach has much value and speaks to the heart of some destructive tendencies of our culture. However, I do not see it as the only faithful way to organize the church.

Richard Rohr, writing in *Sojourners* (July), notes that "the church has always been a movement much more than this institution or that, a continual torrent of the Spirit flowing through the gristmill of human structures and human history." We need to be open to the movement of God's Spirit, to let fresh ways of being the church take shape. A danger occurs when these movements become institutionalized and later shut out other movements that may bring renewal.

The cell church movement has much to offer. It helps Mennonites, who can easily stifle the Spirit by keeping to themselves, open themselves to new people, people they aren't related to or who don't know MCC from WCC. Cell groups force us to change in order to include new people. And change can bring new life.

On the other hand, the cell church concept has some dangers. One is its strongly hierarchical structure, which has the potential to restrict members' voices in decisions. Another potential problem is a self-righteous attitude that judges other Christians who follow a different way of being church.

The face-to-face nature of cell groups is a helpful corrective to such problems, however. As we work out our differences and build up one another through prayer, Bible study, service and mutual aid, we can become a more faithful, just and thriving church.

While I am not involved in a cell church, my congregation for many years has had small groups for sharing and prayer. I have often seen the value of such groups—for the congregation as a whole as well as for the individuals involved. Yet we could do more. Cell groups push us in directions we need to consider.

Let's commit ourselves to take seriously being church. Let's learn from one another and open ourselves to God's Spirit. Let's get to know one another up close, face to face. Who knows what might happen? *Gordon Houser*

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THE Mennonite

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Ramping the church is not enough

- A ramp to the heart (see page 3)
- Do not assume (see page 6)
- Hear the silent cries of deaf people (see page 7)

Prologue

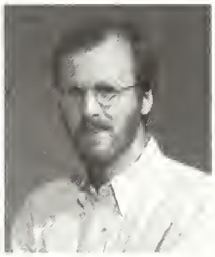
Churches have made some progress, though more is needed, in making their buildings more accessible to people with disabilities. In their review of *That All May Worship*, Phil and Lois Palmer quote a person who observes that "it's 10 times easier for me to buy a pizza or beer than to get into my synagogue."

Marilyn Phemister (see her story beginning on page 3) probes further by asking, How accessible are our hearts to people with disabilities? She goes on to offer handy do's and don'ts for such interaction, as well as pointing out wrong assumptions (see page 6).

Jeff Hoffer shares from his experience helping develop a Mennonite church for deaf people. Listen to his perspective (page 7) for insights on how to reach out to deaf people in your midst.

Mark Baker finds insights in a familiar biblical story (page 11). And J.B. Miller helps us look at long-term care (page 12), a subject we may want to avoid but one that deserves consideration.

Summer is a time when many area conferences hold their annual meetings. This issue includes reports from the Northern and Pacific districts (pages 14-19). I am attending the Conference of Mennonites in Canada sessions July 6-10 in Clearbrook, B.C. Look for more reports in upcoming issues. *gh*



Next issue: Can the church and business be partners?

Cover: Photo by CLEO Photography

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General Conference Mennonite Church

A ramp to the heart

Marilyn Phemister

To become a vital part of church and community life, people with disabilities need access to hearts as well as to buildings.

The man's eyes brushed past me to my walker and back again. "What's your excuse for having that thing?" he asked. The music from the worship service stopped replaying in my mind. I had not expected that question. Before I could respond, my questioner waved to someone across the room and bounded off, leaving new blood on an old wound.

I'm sure the man had good intentions. How could he know he would become distracted before finishing the surgery? And how could he know his question would feel like a slap of rejection from someone who could not accept me as I was?

Like millions of others in the United States and Canada, I have a physical disability. Because of this, I often feel the sting of other people's reactions. I don't believe people want to be cruel. They just don't understand. The little boy who called out, "Hey lady, are you crippled?" could not have known the word "crippled" had become a thorn in my flesh. The young woman who said she admired me for appearing in public could not have known her encouragement would have the effect of a rebuke. And the young teen who stared openly with the expression intended for a pail of maggots—well, he was a teenager, not ready to cope with his fears.

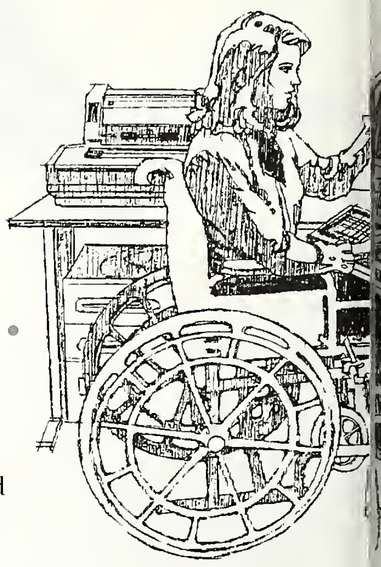
Since those experiences I have progressed to permanent use of a wheelchair. Now I often hear people ask, "Why are you in a wheelchair?" or, "How long have you been in a wheelchair?" These people rarely ask my name or where I live or what I do with my time. They have one preoccupation—they want to know why I am different. And I cannot blame them. I have the same problem.

FEAR AT FIRST SIGHT

The problem is fear—a vague sense of uneasiness when meeting someone with a disability for the first time. It is the fear of the unfamiliar, of someone we think of as different from ourselves. It is the fear of not knowing what to do or of saying the wrong thing, of causing pain for someone already wounded. It is the fear of facing the reality of an imperfect world, of the possibility of ending up in a similar condition, of having to cope with unanswered questions. It is the fear that keeps us from getting too close to a wounded animal, or the fear of becoming trapped with a burden. It is a whole cauldron of fears.

In spite of my own use of a wheelchair, I experience an assortment of fears when I encounter a person on wheels or someone with an obvious disability. I feel the same overwhelming curiosity everyone feels and I ask the same questions, though I do not ask them aloud. To question a person about a physical disability is to intrude

To ignore or pass over a person's gifts because of a disability label or some other perceived difference is to remove a part of the body or to deaden a nerve. The result will be disability for the church.



into that individual's personal living space without an invitation. I don't want to do that. So I pose the question in my mind and wait.

Maybe I will find out the person had an accident resulting in a severed spinal cord. Now the unknown has become known. I have a quadriplegic or a paraplegic here. I know what that is. With this information, the labeling system of my mind pops into action. Like a big garbage compactor, it compresses the whole person—body, soul and spirit—into a neat little package. Then it slaps on a large label, and my fears have been reduced to a manageable size.

We all do this. We all have a labeling machine. If we can't find a specific label, we use a more generic one such as "invalid," "cripple," "disabled," "handicapped" or "physically challenged" (whatever that means). A label can make us more comfortable with someone we think of as different. But labels on people have major drawbacks.

A DOUBLE DECEPTION

A label on a package simplifies shipping it out or storing it away and identifying its contents without opening the box. This works well with paper clips and rubber bands. People are too complex.

A disability label is a double deception. First, it tends to cover the entire package, leaving no room for additional information. This at least implies that there is nothing else in the box. Yes, you will find a disability there. You may also find an artist, a singer and a writer who has inspired many throughout the world. Or you may find an astrophysicist who is himself a star in the world of science. The disability label will not tell you this. It just says "quad."

The disability label also lies, or tells half-truths at best. Take the word "invalid," which literally means "not valid." Is an individual "not valid" as a person if some ability is lacking? Then there is the word "disabled," meaning "not able." Anyone with brain waves is able to think and pray and care and love. The label "disabled" does not fit. Most people wearing this label have many abilities.

Some find ways to excel, often in fields they might never have explored without their disabilities. It is not unusual to find the path of greatest potential among the thorny branches of greatest difficulty.

A disability label does not recognize this potential. It carries a stigma with it that robs a person of feelings of self-worth and forms a barrier against close relationships with other people. The person under the label has the same needs everyone has to belong, to feel loved, to be needed, and to enjoy

THE DECEPTIVE 'DISABILITY' LABEL

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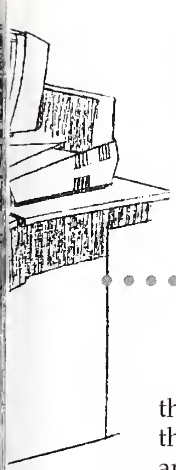
Brian, 11, paralyzed from the neck down after being run over by a car when he was 8 years old, is able to control his wheelchair by various combinations of sucking and blowing through a flexible tube. He attends regular classes in public school and gets excellent grades.

A wheelchair is not a chrome-plated tank armed for battle.



the kinds of relationships that give life its meaning and purpose. As long as this individual is considered "different," fear will keep the label in place and most of his or her needs will remain hidden, along with many assets.

Everyone belonging to Christ has assets and gifts, both natural and spiritual. As Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it" (Ephesians 4:7 NIV). The phrase "each one of us" leaves no one out. And God's gifts are given for the benefit of the entire church. It is our connection to one another as well as to Christ himself that brings about growth.

To ignore or pass over a person's gifts because of a disability label or some other perceived difference is to remove a part of the body or to deaden a nerve. The result will be disability for the church.

A RAMP TO THE HEART

Ramping the church will not remove the disability of prejudice, or of prejudging someone as "different" because of one or two characteristics. Before the person with a disability can function as a vital part of the church, God's people must also ramp their hearts. They must dismantle their labeling machines and discard the labels along with the prejudices that go with them. They must look past the disability to see the person's spiritual and emotional needs as well as the physical ones, and to discover the gifts he or she has for the rest of the body.

Next time you see someone in a wheelchair rolling in your direction, remember that we are all "different" in some way. But in our shared humanity, we are more alike than we are different. Put out a ramp to your heart and open the door to a new relationship. Smile and say, "Good morning," or whatever you would say to anyone else. If you are on a first-name basis with this person, hazard a hug—but do so gently. If you are standing, find a place to sit, or kneel to eye level and visit for a while.

A wheelchair is not a chrome-plated tank armed for battle. A walker is not a Gatling gun. A disability is not a high stone wall or a barbed-wire fence. It is only a shadow. If you step across you may be surprised to find an individual with a gift of creativity, a person with an active mind, or someone who can minister to you. And you may find just the friend you've been looking for.

Marilyn Phemister is a free-lance writer living in Larned, Kan. She has had articles and poems in many Christian periodicals and is the author of First John: A Guide to Fellowship with God *and* The Voice of a Windmill, *both published by Star Books Inc., Wilson,*

The marathon

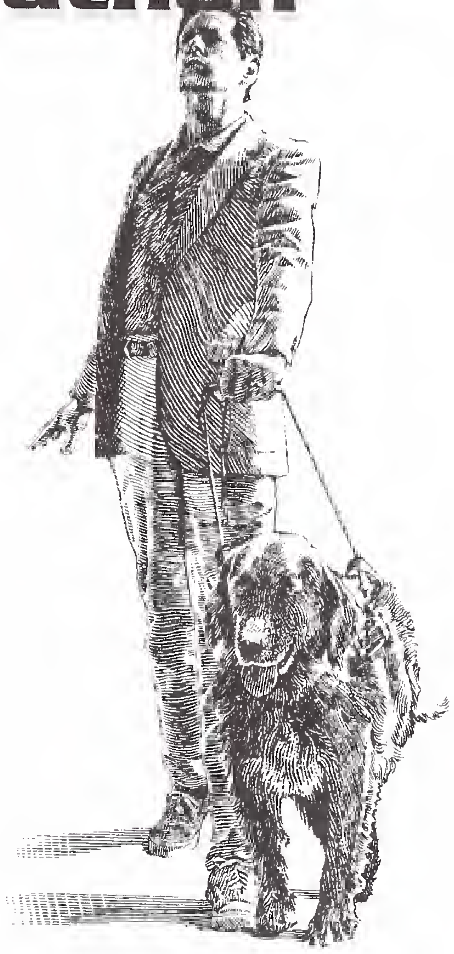
Marilyn Phemister

Bruising stones
mar the course
of the marathon I run.
Thorns and gnarly branches
tear at my sides, ruthless
holes hide in ambush.

There is no stadium
here, no cheering crowd,
no finish line in view. This
is the long race, the run
as long as life.

Run by my side
if you are my friend,
match your stride with mine
and lend your strength, run
until you feel the sting
of blisters on your feet,
and gasp for thinning air.

Run a mile or two
with me, share your visions
of the goal, tell me
I do not run
alone.



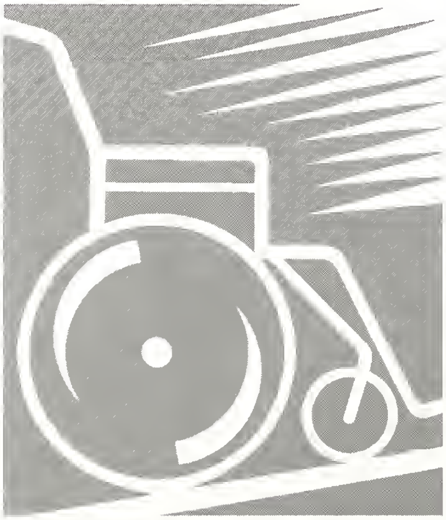
Marilyn Phemister lives in Larned, Kan.

Do's and don'ts

for interaction with someone having a physical disability

DO make eye contact. And smile. Quickly looking away is the flip side of staring.

DO offer assistance up or down steps and curbs, through doorways and across wide-open spaces. If your offer is accepted, ask for instructions before proceeding.



DO help to clear a path if the person is trying to get through a crowd.

DON'T ask questions about the person's disability.

DO touch. People with physical disabilities need physical acceptance. A touch on the arm or shoulder says, "I accept you, body and all."

DON'T go overboard with your friendliness. Reversed prejudice belongs in the same boat with prejudice.

DON'T try to hug or shake hands with someone using a walking aid. Balance may be a priceless possession.

DON'T relate to someone in a wheelchair as you would to a child unless he or she *is* a child.

DON'T try to visit from behind and force the person to turn around. Station yourself in front or to the side. And lower yourself to eye-level if the person is in a wheelchair.

DON'T speak in a loud voice unless you know the person has difficulty hearing.

DON'T apologize if you talk about your own troubles.

DO ask a person with a disability for advice or an opinion once in a while. This is a powerful form of acceptance and may reap valuable ideas.

DON'T make the person with a disability your "project." Friendship offered out of a sense of duty or from a desire for service is not friendship. *Marilyn Phemister*

Do not assume

Do not assume that a person with a disability cannot see curious eyes turning away or hear hushed comments and whisperings or notice feet shifting into a new direction or feel rejected and left alone.

Do not assume that a person in a wheelchair has strong arms, can reach to any height, can get up a ramp just because it's there or through a doorway just because the door is open or would take offense if you offered help.

Do not assume that a person with a disability wants to tell you all about it and is just waiting for you to ask or that such information needs to be released into public domain.

Do not assume that a person in a wheelchair has never had prayer for healing or is unhappy with life and angry at God or has never heard of God's love or has no faith or needs to be rescued in some way.

Do not assume that a person in a wheelchair is a prayer warrior or some kind of super saint or is courageous or has no struggles with temptations of the flesh.

Do not assume that a person in a wheelchair is confined by the chair and has nothing to do but sit or has reduced mental activity or cannot work or pursue personal interests and hobbies.

Do not assume that a person in a wheelchair cannot hold a position of leadership or of ministry or service to others or that he or she prefers the sidelines and will be satisfied with watching others play the game. *Marilyn Phemister*

How your church can reach out to deaf people with a listening heart

Hear the silent cries of deaf people

Jeff Hoffer

Deaf people tend to feel that hearing people do not care how they feel. Therefore, they often become frustrated and decide to leave the church.

Where are the deaf people in our churches? For those still in the church, are they happy, satisfied, encouraged to use their skills? If they are not, we will lose these people. Often we have focused too much on reaching out to the community through serving and sharing the gospel and in the process have overlooked the needs of deaf people, especially children, within our congregations.

First Deaf Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa., is one church that tries to meet the needs of deaf people. It is the only deaf Mennonite church with a deaf pastor. This church has heard the silent cries of deaf people.

During the last century the gospel has not reached deaf people in their own language—American Sign Language—because most people don't understand deaf people and their needs. We now have more awareness of deaf people, their language and needs.

Are you willing to go forth, acknowledging deaf people and working together more than ever to reach them with a listening heart? Here are some suggestions:

- Encourage some hearing members of your church to learn sign language.
- If your church has more than four deaf people, encourage them to begin their own Sunday school class or Bible study. Allow deaf people to lead the group; your role is to encourage them and give assistance as needed. Find out what deaf people would like to see happen and encourage them to fulfill their vision.
- Plan a workshop about deaf people and their culture for the benefit of other church members.
- Bring in a deaf guest speaker.
- Don't make plans for a ministry to deaf people without consulting your deaf members. Consult them first and encourage them to be involved in serving the Lord.
- For a congregation searching for an interpreter, don't invite someone who has had only one course in sign language. Find someone who has been involved with deaf people or is a certified interpreter. Another option is to ask your deaf members for suggestions and input.
- Plan social events for deaf people, especially deaf children and those who are mainstreamed (in public schools).

Jeff Hoffer is director of the deaf ministries program of Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Ind.

For more information contact
Deaf Ministries, P.O. Box 247,
Riverdale, MD 20738; (301) 699-1596 (TTY only) or (301) 699-1597 (voice only).

Larry Cornies

Learn sign language: *Worshipers at Bethlehem '83 use sign language during a song.*

Letters

Don't ignore differences

I want to strongly endorse the letter by Merle Good (May 24 issue) and pay close attention to the concerns he expresses rather than sweep them under the rug, as Vern Preheim wants us to do.

Now is the time to weigh the pros and cons of this controversial issue and not until after "all the horses have been turned out of the barn." Let's not water down the important precepts of our Anabaptist tenets more than has been done just for the sake of integration. *John D. Wiebe, Newton, Kan.*

Claim the power of Christ

I want to commend Eastern District leaders for presenting a policy statement on sexuality, which had to do with homosexuality, at their annual sessions.

Anabaptist, Bible-believing Mennonites need not debate that issue. The Scriptures speak clearly on the subject. Interpretations are unnecessary.

Why are so many of our Mennonite pastors and leaders confused on that issue? It's because our colleges and seminaries have scuttled the concept that the Bible is God's infallible Word, with a capital W.

It has been my privilege to preach that Word for over 55 years. Such a view of God's Word makes preaching exciting, even at age 80.

Leading psychologists and psychiatrists agree that homosexuality is a learned habit rather than an orientation. Therefore, Bible-believing Mennonites should reach out in love and compassion toward those who are shackled with this sin. Thank God there is hope, victory and deliverance waiting for those who want it.

According to 1 Corinthians 6:9 there were those within the church who had been "male prostitutes and homosexuals." But verse 11 states, "You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Christian friends, let us accept these needy people. Let us reach out to help them. Our God is able and willing to deliver them. Let us claim the cleansing power of Christ for their deliverance. *Harold Burkholder, Elbing, Kan.*

Don't dismiss members' souls

After spending many years reading *The Mennonite*, I have decided to speak my mind. The recent letter from Wilmer Sprunger (May 10, page 9) about the *Philadelphia* movie review (Feb. 22, page 22) caused quite a stir. After years of letters that continue to downgrade and discount the feelings, trials and struggles of gay people, their families and partners, I feel it is time for an outsider to give his views.

First, I am not a Mennonite. I have lived with my partner, who is a Mennonite, for 13 years. We have had, since we were both in our late teens, a commitment to each other. No more than other couples do we "elevate human values and characteristics, focusing everything on mankind, or humanity," as Mr. Sprunger states that gays must. We believe that all things should be "subservient to and centered around Jesus Christ," making his assumption that gay people are humanist untrue in our case.

Further, I believe Mr. Sprunger's statement that the movie *Philadelphia* is "slick propaganda" for homosexuality is bunk. I thought the movie was about AIDS, human feelings and a man's struggle with death. I doubt if Mr. Sprunger even saw the movie. It would not be unlike some "protectors" to criticize what they have not seen or experienced.

Finally, I believe Mr. Sprunger errs in his dismissal of the word "homophobic" as a word "we" use to describe anyone who disagrees with us. There are many who disagree with me that I would never classify as homophobic. But aren't you, Mr. Sprunger, doing what you accuse us of doing? You classify anyone who does not agree with you as a "humanist," leaving little room for those that aren't Mennonite or don't agree with your views on gays to be Christian.

The letters on this subject will not end. It is good that *The Mennonite* and Larry Penner will continue to have a dialogue. As a non-Mennonite, my hardship comes from watching one of your most proud members become torn apart from letters such as Mr. Sprunger's. From my long association with Mennonites, I have found that it is more than a religion—it is also a cultural way of life. Mr. Sprunger and others: When you attack and nullify the importance of those who are Christian but live differently, you not only dismiss the souls of your members, you also break the hearts of your people. *Name withheld by request*

Advantages of integration

The letters of Robert Ramseyer (May 10) and Merle Good (May 24) prompt me to write on the subject of GC/MC integration. First, in response to Robert Ramseyer let me list some advantages of integration/merger.

1. We will give solid witness to our affirmation that we believe in unity. There will be organic evidence, not only simplistic affirmations.
2. We will eliminate a lot of confusion to new Christians joining our churches to whom our historic differences do not have any meaning. They see our denominational lines as majoring on minor issues and giving the lie to the statement that "we all believe in unity."
3. We will be encouraging isolated congregations, separated from larger Mennonite centers, to have fellowship in a variety of activities with the Mennonite churches in the area. Our denominational lines set up walls that divide.
4. We can work in a unified way to develop a strategy for church planting that will strengthen the overall witness we want to give. This will give the church-planting pastors a sense of oneness with other church planters.
5. When a GC person moves to a city where there is only an MC church, we now have to shift our loyalties if we unite with that church, and vice versa. This would no longer need to be the case if we were united.
6. We could present a more unified approach to overseas mission. How sad that we have carried our historic divisions to our mission work. If a united Mennonite church is desirable in Japan, why not in the United States?

Merle Good's letter reflects his background in the Lancaster Mennonite Conference. He has almost no regular contact with other GC congregations. The Lancaster Conference has 19,339 members in 236 congregations. There are only five GC congregations in Lancaster County, with a total membership of 961. One wonders what is so frightening about greater fellowship with congregations that represent only 5 percent of his conference?

We need to face the fact that we are living in a new era. We have been told our conferences are facing a crisis. Part of the crisis is that the current generation is not enamored with conference structures.

Merle Good is dismayed about the small response to the questionnaire sent to churches. For many churches the question of integration has already been decided. They have already voted. The churches of Ontario are already working together, and several other area conferences have taken meaningful steps in that direction. How often must a conference or congregation vote to show their thinking? Our GC congregation has more members with earlier non-GC Mennonite background than it has GC-background members. Our pastor meets regularly with the pastors of the MC churches, and we have fellowship with those churches. So we did not go through the motions of opening the question and voting again. We have been taking such actions over the years and so have many other congregations. For members of the Lancaster Conference, who will be voting on the issue for the first time, this is new agenda. With so few GC members in their midst, they do not have any history of fellowship with GC congregations. So we need to hear their questions, but they need to hear our experiences and our desires to move beyond the divisions that have separated us in the past. *David Habegger, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

From our leaders

Speaking out on issues

Vern Preheim

Recently someone asked me, "Why is the conference so silent on abortion?" The person went on to say, "If we are opposed to killing in war, then to be consistent we should also oppose abortion." I would add, "And we should oppose capital punishment."

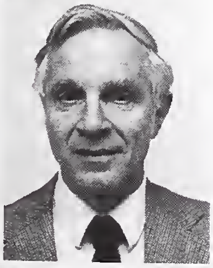
In 1980 the General Conference passed "Guidelines on Abortion." A key passage in the guidelines reads, "The majority of us believes that most abortions cannot be justified on moral grounds, although we are unwilling to say that abortion is never justified. … Some of us, however, believe that abortion is never justified."

In 1965 the General Conference passed "A Christian Declaration on Capital Punishment." The key passage in it reads, "Since Christ through his redemptive work has fulfilled the requirement of the death penalty and has given the church a ministry of reconciliation, and in view of the injustice and ineffectiveness of capital punishment as a means for the achievement of the purpose of government, we express our conviction that its use should be discontinued."

The General Conference has addressed the issues of abortion and of capital punishment. Any further speaking out on these is most appropriately done by individuals and congregations.

The most effective witness to ourselves and to society on social and moral issues is a witness of conscience by individuals in the context of the local congregation. Conference guidelines or statements can help individuals with that needed witness.

The General Conference meets every three years to do business. That business includes deciding major issues and making joint pronouncements. The 1995 General Conference business sessions in Wichita, Kan., July 25-30, will focus on a new vision statement, a new confession of faith and a decision on whether or not the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church should form a new Mennonite denomination. This seems like ample agenda for the 1995 business. Unless something unexpected happens between now and then, we will not be passing any new statements or guidelines. The ones we already have can help individuals witness on concerns such as abortion, capital punishment and racism. Anyone desiring a copy of one of these guidelines or statements may request it from my office.



Vern Preheim is general secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church. You may contact him at P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

'Robin Hoodism'

Willard Krabill's article, "An Opportunity the Church Dare Not Ignore," (May 10 issue) demands comment.

In a number of places he writes about "justice and stewardship." What about "freedom" and being free from the coercion of government? He refers to "new ways of sharing." If the government gets involved, these new ways of sharing are just sugar-coated words for government coercion. All legislation has the threat of government force behind it. Are new taxes (to fund government health care) a form of sharing? There is nothing voluntary about it, and that takes the goodness out of it. The end does not justify the means. We do not force people to become Christians even though this would be in their best interest.

Krabill writes about the competition in the Reagan/Bush era. Who is he kidding? We do not and have not had true marketplace competition for many years. The government meddles with our markets (not quite to the extent of some other nations), and when this meddling causes problems it claims that the actions were not comprehensive enough.

He writes that "the greater fear should be that of doing nothing or changing too little." Has this man no fear of making things worse? The government does not have a good track record. I am surprised at his naiveté.

He writes of the success of Medicaid and Medicare. Government programs are not success stories, they simply have the threat of force behind them.

He writes about the governments of other industrialized nations. He never questions whether they are right. He seems to subscribe to the concept of morality of the majority. If everyone is doing it, it must be right.

He writes that "many consider our current 'system' a national disgrace." These are only those who lament personal freedom and long for society completely controlled by the state. There are probably more who consider our current system the best in the world.

He writes about how "the church now has an opportunity. ..." The opportunity has been there all along. Caring for the sick is something that the church has been commanded to do. This is not a new opportunity. Specifically, the church should minister to those "medically uninsurable."

He writes about "our society." The church should not be taking its cues from society. We get guidance from God. The church should be leading in social issues, not following wherever society goes.

He writes about mutual aid and the willingness to forego so that someone else may be cared for. This concept is wonderful, so let's work diligently not to let the government get involved.

"Robin Hoodism" seems to be gathering acceptance. Thievery, even if it is from the rich, is never acceptable. Mennonites increasingly seem to embrace the use of force and violence. They may never personally use these means, but if they can get the government to do it, that justifies it. They grant themselves forgiveness by hiding behind the excuse that the government did it. This excuse does not work when it comes to war and defense-related issues. Why does it work here? We need to be careful and consistent in our morality. *Royce Buller, Elkhart, Ind.*

The Mennonite in India

Greetings in the name of Christ Jesus.

I am a Mennonite Christian young man studying in a university. Being a Mennonite, I need to stand for my faith, and it is not so easy now where the society is in confusion. There are many intellectual, ethical and moral questions that need to be answered in the light of the Word of God. We Christian students constantly look for spiritual help to sustain.

I have found *The Mennonite* (which I borrow from a friend) very helpful in such situations. Articles speak directly on many burning issues and encourage us to stand for the truth.

I express my thankfulness for the Feb. 8 issue, devoted to university students. All the articles are relevant and helpful. I hope you'll bring out more issues on university life.

I like *The Mennonite* magazine very much. Therefore, may I humbly request you to kindly include me in your gift subscribers list and send me *The Mennonite* regularly? This will help me in my ministry among university students. With much prayers, yours in Christ. *Nutan Prabhat Kanwar, Jagdeeshpur, India*

From our mission workers

Taguatinga, Brazil—We have started working with the churches in our area. Each of us teaches a basic Christian discipleship course and we are coordinating Christian education programs for the emerging congregation in Samambaia. They have about six involved and committed adults in the congregation. The small number means they are being stretched to be preachers, teachers, and worship and music leaders, even if they aren't so gifted or qualified. Our goal (as laid out by their parent church in Ceilandia) is to encourage and teach them to be stronger leaders. This means helping them prepare Sunday school lessons rather than teach them ourselves, making suggestions as to ways to improve worship without taking over, and meeting with the main leaders every week to listen, encourage and build relationships. The group has recently purchased a lot with a building on it, which will improve the facilities considerably. Until now they have been meeting in a closed-in porch of one of the member's homes. This Saturday we will celebrate the first anniversary of the congregation with the first meeting at the new location. It should be exciting, as we have a large group of young people from another church coming to help with the music. *Steve and Janet Plenert*

Maun, Botswana—Two Bible classes have begun at a small "drum church" in the western part of Maun. Tuesday evening I teach a group of older adults and pastors from the St. Eli Dwelling Mission; Thursday evening is a young people's class (secondary school-age girls). The average attendance is 10 to 12 in each class. They have begun with a general Bible survey and the Baptist Mission's "Jesu Ke Mang?" (Who Is Jesus?) course.

Bishop S. Mfaladi of the Revelation Blessed Peace Church has informed me that he has chosen four young men for me to teach and to travel with me on my Okavango trips, learning practical ministry.

Lately I have come to recognize how much of the life of African Independent Church (AIC) congregations centers on healing ministry. Every evening the yards of the pastors are filled with people who have come for healing prayers.

I am also learning firsthand about the ministry. One of the two Cubs football players at my place has been sick with an illness for which the Western doctors and traditional doctors alike cannot determine the cause.

Healing here is a greater factor in evangelism than preaching. I hear account after account of people coming to faith and a specific church through this ministry.

A recent example is that of a young man named Gasethata, whom I have known since 1989. I never had any real hope that he would come to faith in Christ, although he was on my daily prayer list. This year, I was surprised to find him at the Easter gathering of the Revelation Blessed Peace Church at Kgagodi. Semiwealthy and rapidly becoming more successful in his work, he had, in mid-March, what we would term a nervous breakdown. He was brought by his relatives to Bishop Mfaladi, tied hand and foot, threatening violence. Although not yet completely well, he is definitely on the way and is enthusiastic about Christ and the church.

I also admit that I feel a bit helpless when called upon to pray for the sick, which happens regularly in AIC services. I don't sense in myself much of the power or discernment that I see in the prayer warriors in these churches. *Eugene Thieszen*

Jesus touches our shame

A lesson about healing from Mark 5:21-34

Mark D. Baker

You are on a street corner downtown with no clothes on. You make a futile effort to cover yourself with your hands and look for a place to hide. Every head turns your direction. Then you wake up. It was a dream, but the sweat on your body lets you know the power of this emotion—shame.

We all have had experiences when we have felt everyone staring at us and we wished we could disappear. These are moments of shame: tripping and falling on some stairs, giving the wrong answer in a class, having the only response to a joke you have told be dead silence. These experiences are inevitable.

There is also a deeper, internalized shame that leads us to believe we are deficient. We internalize the imaginary voices that whisper things like, "You're ugly," "You're dumb," "You talk too much," "You're poor," "You're a failure" or "You're not athletic."

How does God respond to our shame? The Gospels show us how Jesus responded. In Mark 5:21-34, we find Jesus on his way to Jairus' house. A crowd of people accompanies him, pressing on all sides. One woman pushes her way through the crowd, thrusts her hand between a couple of people, touches the back of Jesus' robe and is miraculously healed.

What do we know about this nameless woman? We know she has suffered greatly. Sick for 12 years, she has experienced the frustration of going from doctor to doctor seeking a cure. These fruitless efforts have left her destitute.

Her suffering goes deeper, however, because of her specific ailment. Most likely she has had an unusual menstrual flow. This flow of blood brought her special problems in her religious community. According to Levitical law someone with an open wound or menstrual flow was considered "unclean" (Leviticus 15:25-33). While unclean, a person could not enter the temple. For most people that was a temporary problem; for this woman it was a permanent state.

Her situation is further complicated by the fact that contact with an unclean person makes one unclean as well. Unfortunately for her, she lived in a time when the Pharisees brought increased attention to these laws and went to the extreme of applying temple laws in their homes. Therefore, Pharisees and their followers would not have allowed this woman into their homes. Although others would not go to that extent, she most likely suffered a general stigma because of how the Pharisees treated her.

Secretly: In the midst of her physical and economic sufferings this woman undoubtedly carried a heavy burden of shame. After 12 long years it is hard to imagine that this shame had not penetrated her being. She would have felt she was a problem for any she had contact with. It is no wonder she approached Jesus from behind and wanted to touch his robe secretly. Beaten down by shame, she sought to draw as little attention to herself as possible. Although confident of his healing power, she probably thought he would want to avoid her like all the other religious leaders. By anonymously touching the robe she avoided confrontation.

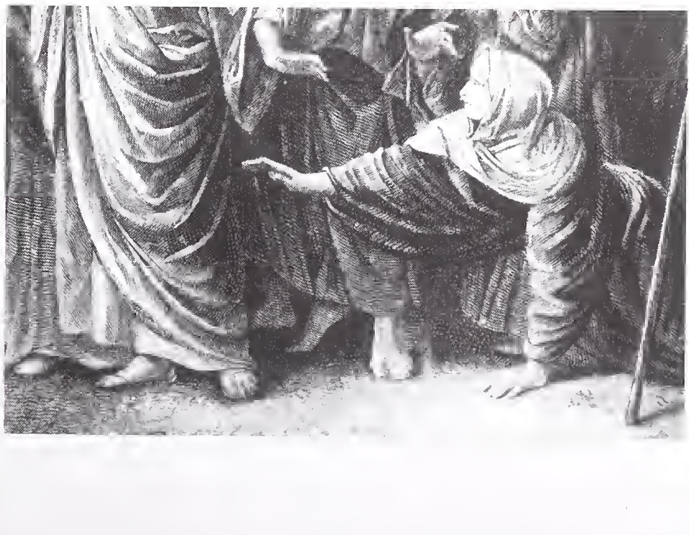
Imagine the rush of joy as she felt the healing of her body. But that emotion was overcome by other emotion when she heard Jesus' words, "Who touched my clothes?" She must have expected an angry response as she fearfully admitted to Jesus that she had touched him. But instead of condemning her for contaminating him with her uncleanness, Jesus said, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease."

Why did Jesus ask who had touched him? To impress the disciples? Probably not. They had already seen more spectacular things. Jesus' concern was for the woman. First of all, by making her healing public he immediately rips away her "unclean" label and starts the process of her re-entry into the community as a healthy person. More significantly Jesus understands that this woman needed more than just physical healing. He pulls her from her shamed position and brings her before the crowd, not to condemn her but to offer her words of peace and encouragement.

Jesus' words must have soaked into her being like water into the dry soil around a parched plant. For years the religious system had alienated her. Although her problem was physical, the looks of the religious leaders must have made her feel inferior as a person, rejected. Now this rabbi, Jesus, offers words that praise her faith, gentle words of peace that soothe her soul, words of hope that her suffering had passed.

Jesus considered it so important to say these words to this woman that he stopped and asked that question even while en route to another person in urgent need of his attention. Certainly God wants to demonstrate similar concern to us as we struggle with our shame.

Mark D. Baker is a doctoral student in theology at Duke University and a member of Durham (N.C.) Mennonite Church.



RNS

Jesus understands that this woman needed more than just physical healing.

Fiscal health

Think ahead about long-term care

Answers to questions about long-term-care insurance

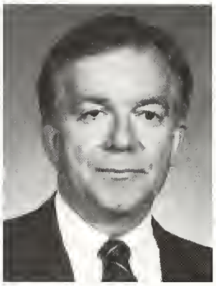
J.B. Miller

Most of us don't want to think about long-term care. We often don't even want to think about the possibility that we might need care in a nursing home. But the fact remains that many of us we will need some type of professional long-term care in the waning years of our lives.

Many of us think there is little chance we will need professional long-term care. However, statistics show that 40 percent of everyone over age 65 will enter a nursing home at some point. Half will stay less than three months, but the average stay for the other half will be 30 months.

Long-term care is not cheap, and how to pay for this expense is never an easy consideration. If you live in the United States, a one-year stay in a nursing home will cost between $26,750 and $80,200. A 30-month stay will cost between $66,875 and $200,500.

But for U.S. citizens, won't Medicare, Medicaid or my private health insurance pay for my long-term care? On average, Medicare pays only 2 percent of long-term-care expenses incurred in the United States. The rest comes either from the patient, private insurance or Medicaid. Medicaid pays for almost half of all long-term-care expenses. But to receive Medicaid, you must meet state eligibility requirements. The first requirement is that you have a financial need, so you must use up most of your assets or not have any in the first place. Experience shows that many people who begin paying for long-term care from their own resources end up qualifying for Medicaid. This is because they spend so much of their own money that they eventually become eligible for Medicaid.



J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Eligibility requirements in the United States vary from state to state and change from year to year. A typical listing of assets that you can keep may include $1,600 in cash, burial plots for immediate family members, a burial fund of $1,500 for you and a spouse, and a limited amount of life insurance. In most cases you may keep a home, a car, and property used in a business. If you have a spouse, he or she may keep from $13,000 to $68,000 in assets, depending which state you live in.

Isn't long-term-care insurance expensive? Yes, it may be. As with most insurance, long-term-care insurance is more expensive for an older person. Once purchased, however, premiums often stay at the initial price and do not increase over time. There are also health considerations, since people are rated (resulting in higher premiums) or even denied coverage depending on their health conditions.

How expensive is it? Recent annual prices for a policy with an inflation rider (the amount of coverage will increase based on the rate of inflation) were as follows (see table):

Age	Policy pays $80/day	Policy pays $100/day
45	$ 789	$ 918
55	$1,305	$1,534
60	$1,768	$1,934
65	$2,105	$2,496
70	$3,021	$3,593

As with any insurance, always purchase long-term-care insurance from an agent you know and trust. Never purchase long-term-care insurance over the phone from someone you have never met or from an organization you don't know.

Should you wait to consider long-term-care insurance until after health-care reform occurs? No. There is little in any of the current health-care-reform proposals that would provide adequate long-term-care protection. The chance for health-care reform to affect long-term care is slim.

People occasionally ask, **Why not just give our assets away when we need long-term care and then qualify for Medicaid?** Beyond the ethical issues surrounding such behavior, the government frowns on it as well. To discourage such actions, the government has instituted a 36-month (in some cases a 60-month) look-back, meaning that if assets are transferred within those time periods, Medicaid eligibility is denied or delayed. Also, when you become dependent on Medicaid, you may relinquish some choice of facilities.

For people who can access the Canadian system, governmental programs are much more generous than those in the United States and vary from province to province. What a Canadian pays out of her or his own pocket depends on income, not on assets owned. The amount that is paid by the patient increases as income for the patient rises. In Manitoba, for example, it begins at a point where the government pays all expenses and tops out where the patient pays a maximum of $42 per day. Under the Canadian system the patient is not required to liquidate assets to pay for long-term care; rather, the level of government support is based on the patient's level of income.

Long-term-care insurance may appear expensive, but like most insurance it is a bargain when the need arises. An important part of estate planning is to consider how you would pay for long-term care before you need it. And many of us will need it someday.

News

Bolivians ask MCC to get out

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee workers were withdrawn from the Yucumo region of Beni department in April after local community leaders asked MCC to leave.

Bolivian government officials say this is the first case they know of in Bolivia of an international non-governmental agency being attacked (with mostly unfounded accusations) in order to get it out of the region, says Abe Janzen, MCC Bolivia country representative.

MCC entered Yucumo in 1989, invited by a peasant federation—a local political structure composed of up to 30 or 40 communities—to work in agricultural and health development. Yucumo is a tropical frontier region inhabited mainly by indigenous Quechua and Aymara people who have left the Andes highland due to drought and lack of cultivable land. They employ slash-and-burn techniques to carve farms out of the Amazon jungle.

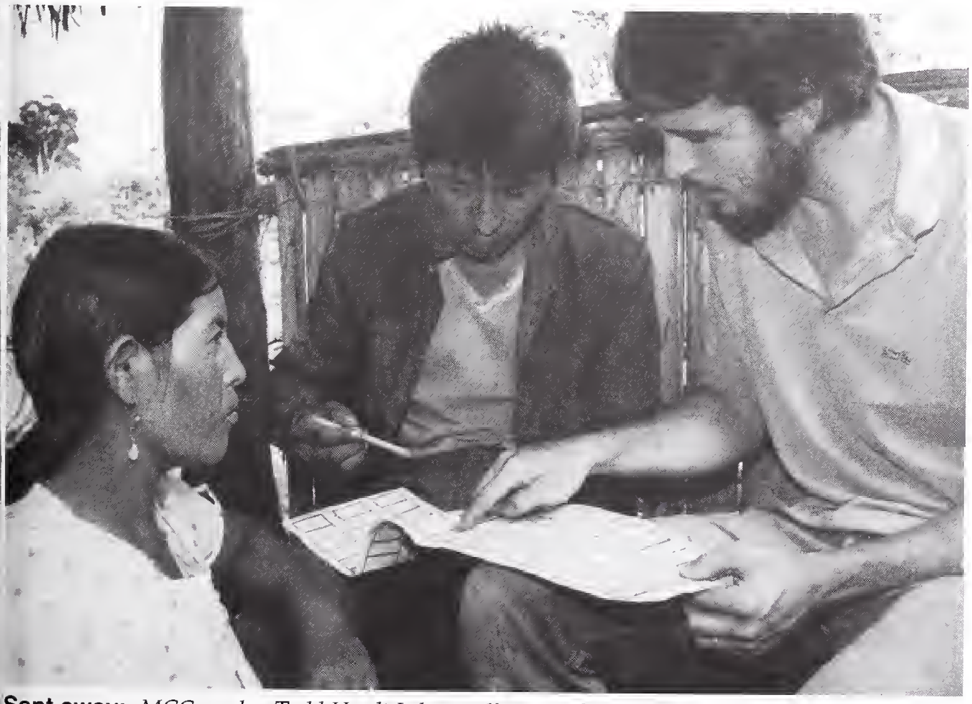
In the past two years, six influential federation leaders decided they did not want foreigners in the area and moved to get international agencies out. Because MCC decided not to counterattack, and because MCC had more North American personnel living in the zone than other organizations, MCC became the leaders' primary target, says Janzen.

Power: The exact reasons why MCC was asked to leave are uncertain, but have to do with power and personal economic interests in a 988,000-acre/400,000-hectare forest reserve, as well as development of the entire region, says Janzen. At least one of the same leaders has been caught illegally trucking mahogany logs out of the reserve.

Now being debated is how the forest reserve will be managed. Part of it is off-limits to exploitation, but another part will be open to logging and other uses.

At the same time the Bolivian government has been opening the country to foreign investment. These six Yucumo leaders played on fears that foreigners will control Bolivia's rainforests and other property to create ill will toward MCC and other international agencies.

The leaders also complained about MCC's work style—long on people, short on cash. They complained that



Dawn Hardt Lehman (MCC)

Sent away: *MCC worker Todd Hardt Lehman discusses farming plans with a couple who has settled in Bolivia's Yucumo area.*

Inside the news

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Three Christian aid agencies have joined in a "monetization" effort to use Canadian flour to help Nicaraguan bean farmers. The goal is a long-term assistance program for Nicaraguan bean growers, sponsored by Mennonite Economic Development Associates. Its partners in the monetization stage are Mennonite Central Committee Canada and Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The bank procured 700 metric tons of prairie wheat flour to be sold to Nicaraguan bakers. MCC Canada helped fund shipment of the flour, which arrived in Nicaragua in May. Proceeds from the sales will be used to launch MEDA's new rural agricultural program in that country.

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Two Mennonite organizations have sponsored recent peace workshops in Serbia. On April 30 a group from the Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center, Bluffton, Ohio, left for Subotica, Serbia, to present a five-day workshop for teachers on the theme "Journeying." Film producer Susan Hope, visual artist and musician Oscar Velasquez and writer Libby Hostetler used the arts to promote peace through conflict management, respect for diversity and building self-esteem. The teachers in attendance work with refugee children who have fled to Serbia from Bosnia and Croatia. In May Bob Williamson of the Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center traveled to Serbia to teach peacemaking skills to students at a six-month Bible school sponsored by Christ's Pentecostal Church in Novi Sad.

Summer school enrollment at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., has risen from 92 when summer courses were first offered to 130 this summer. More than half the students at AMBS this summer are enrolled only for summer courses; fewer than half are either coming early to begin longer-term study or are continuing from the previous year. All courses except a beginning course in Hebrew are two-week courses. These are designed to be convenient opportunities for pastors, church lay leaders, teachers and people exploring seminary studies.

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A new health plan for pastors and church employees will give them the ability to move between church employers without having to reapply for coverage. The plan is being established by the Mennonite Church, General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Brethren Church in cooperation with Mennonite Mutual Aid for employees of congregations, conference and district offices and denominational offices. Coverage is guaranteed for all employees who enroll within a limited open enrollment period. The first open enrollment period is expected to begin in the fall.

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Honda of America and Bluffton (Ohio) College will create an art collection and outdoor peace sculpture garden at the Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center at the college. The center is dedicated to peace education for children. Honda will donate $75,000 to the center over a three-year period. During the first two years, works of art focusing on separate annual themes will be purchased. An outdoor peace sculpture garden will be created on campus during the third year.

MCC was not building bridges, roads and other capital-intensive infrastructure, even though MCC workers had helped secure outside funds and had assisted three communities in installing a gravity water system. The system now effectively services the three communities.

"Trying to work with elected leaders who are self-serving and without scruples has left our volunteers frustrated and fatigued, especially since the local people are being victimized by their own local leaders," says Janzen.

What would Jesus do? The situation has raised questions about an appropriate Christian response.

"Do you stay and struggle with the leaders for the sake of those who can't or won't? Jesus beat the money changers out of the temple. Or do you deal with unscrupulous leaders sacrificially, giving up your work? In the end, Jesus could have vindicated himself against all the lies hurled at him but did not," Janzen says. "We hope our decision to remove MCC workers leads to increased awareness among local people, and a greater sense of responsibility for their own development."

The MCC Bolivia team worked closely with Bolivian government officials and the MCC Bolivia advisory committee since a Dec. 17, 1993, fax in which federation leaders formally complained about MCC's work style.

At one point in early January of this year, Janzen thought they had worked out their differences. Three weeks later he received a letter from representatives of the 11 communities in which MCC focuses its work asking MCC to leave the region. Only 30 people from the 11 communities had attended the meeting at which the vote was taken.

"Officials in La Paz reminded us that no matter what kind of leaders they were, they had been elected. And given MCC's philosophy of working only where we are invited and wanted, reassigning our volunteers seemed the best option," says Janzen.

In April, five North American MCC workers left Yucumo publicly and without expressions of bitterness or anger, Janzen says. "We wanted our neighbors to know about our departure and ask questions about how it came about. We hope this course of action is a useful testimony of our faith." A Bolivian MCC worker, a doctor, stayed another month while her children were in school.

Since April, several of the communities have removed their leaders from office and left the federation; several have joined other federations. Some have asked MCC to return. Since the original six leaders are still in the zone and are active, however, and the MCC workers have started other assignments, MCC Bolivia does not intend to place workers in Yucumo in the near future.

Even after MCC had left, two Yucumo federation representatives went to La Paz to try to stop the government from renewing MCC's national agreement permitting MCC to work in Bolivia. They accused MCC and other nongovernmental organizations in the Yucumo zone of complicity in a murder, of sterilizing women, of medically retarding young children and of stirring up the people against their leaders. However, the government proceeded to sign a new three-year agreement for MCC's work in Bolivia. *Emily Will*

NDC debates integration and homosexuality

Henderson, Neb. (GCMC)—While the theme of the second joint meeting of the Northern District Conference and the Iowa-Nebraska Conference here June 16-19 was "Unity of Spirit, Bond of Peace," delegates had varying viewpoints about one church's approach toward homosexuality and other issues.

During a joint session June 16 and a separate NDC session June 17, delegates responded to a report by the NDC home missions committee about the St. Paul (Minn.) Mennonite Fellowship (see story, page 16).

The 350 delegates and guests also spent considerable time on the topic of integration. In the opening session, Firman Gingerich, Iowa-Nebraska moderator, and Norman Hofer, NDC president, brought the message in dialogue form.

They reflected on the history and certain facts about the two conferences. The Northern District has 34 congregations with 4,985 members. The Iowa-Nebraska conference has 35 congregations with 4,549 members. Four churches are already dually affiliated with both groups.

Hofer observed, "Perhaps we have more diversity within our districts than between our districts." Both recalled the many ways the districts have already cooperated, including Civilian Public Service, Mennonite Disaster Service, Mennonite Foundation, Sunday school curriculum and a joint confession of faith.

"Our lines of separation are fading rapidly, and we both are better for it," Hofer said.

"Integration would involve a major shift in leadership," Gingerich said, "and regionalism is a problem for both conferences. Different patterns of loyalties would have to be developed. We could benefit from doing more biblical discerning together."

The two conference leaders moved nearer to each other throughout the message until they joined in the center behind the pulpit. Gingerich came with a jar of corn grown in Iowa, and Hofer came with a jar of wheat grown in Montana. They mixed this grain at the end of their message to symbolize how the two conferences can gain through being brought together.

In his three messages, conference speaker James Gingerich looked at various integration issues and shared about the work of the Integration Exploration Committee.

"We can't sit on our differences and hide them if we want to have unity," said Gingerich, a pastor of First Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan., and a member of the integration committee. "We must struggle with our diversity while working on our unity. The common denominator is Jesus Christ."

Key issues include funding and the combining of program agencies, loyalty (whether churches can transfer loyalty to a united Mennonite church), size (it is hard to function if a conference covers too large or too small an area), and accountability (congregations must be accountable to one another and to the larger church).

New loyalty: Numerous delegates responded to the loyalty issue. "Pastors are expected to move loyalties from one congregation to another," said Robert Engbrecht, Freeman, S.D. "Perhaps that is a good model to follow for shifting loyalties."

Some people have experienced shifting loyalties from one conference to another because of intermarriage or because of a change of location. "There is grieving in that process when change forces one to learn to know new people and new traditions, but it is a good growing experience and one gets a larger view of the body of Christ," said Lois Janzen Preheim, Freeman.

"Integration is like a marriage," said

Kathryn Goertzen

Mixing bowl: *Firman Gingerich and Norman Hofer use a wheat and corn mixture as an illustration of how integration of the two conferences might work.*

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate students are visiting the Bishops Boys School of Amman, Jordan, June 28-July 19. The exchange was prompted when Bishops School headmaster Azmi Shahin visited the Kitchener, Ont., school during 1992-93 to see the operations of a Christian private school in Canada and to learn about Mennonites. Jordanian students are expected to come to Rockway in summer 1995.

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North American Mennonites and Brethren in Christ are being asked to help a debt-ridden Mexican Mennonite colony through Mennonite Central Committee Canada. The La Batea colony, located in the state of Zacatecas, has suffered three consecutive crop failures. It is now debt-ridden and hard-pressed to find money for seeding. The colony needs $100,000 U.S. / $138,000 Cdn. to buy seed, fuel and fertilizer. The money will be given as an interest-free loan. When paid, it will be used to help other colonies in Mexico.

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In the midst of Haiti's political turmoil, a new credit union has emerged, thanks to Mennonite Economic Development Associates. Known as SHEC ("Societe Haitienne d'Epargne et de Credit"), the new credit union grew out of MEDA's microenterprise assistance program. The client- and staff-owned credit union was established in January with 50 founding members. Another 150 Haitians joined by spring, and 500 additional membership requests await processing. SHEC has 23 employees, all former MEDA staffers. MEDA began its Small Business Development Program in Haiti in 1986. In time the program became a locally operated institution and this year was restructured as a savings and loan cooperative. The official opening was to be held this month.

San Antonio (Texas) Mennonite Fellowship has voted to change its name to San Antonio Mennonite Church.

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Mennonite Health Assembly will be held March 23-26, 1995, in Washington. The conference is designed for pastors, chaplains, health professionals and caregivers. Contact MHA at P.O. Box 818, Goshen, IN 46526.

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Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., graduated the fourth class from its Master of Theological Studies program June 5. The five graduates were Philip Enns, Andrew Frey, Willard Metzger, Phyllis Tribby and Douglas Zehr.

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"A Door of Hope," a conference on family violence for pastors, church leaders, survivors and friends, will be held Sept. 30-Oct. 1 at Dalhousie Mennonite Brethren Church, Calgary, Alta. The conference, sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Alberta, will feature speakers Carolyn Holderread Heggen and David Schroeder. For information call (403) 275-6935.

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Graduate students pursuing careers in nursing may apply for loans offered by Mennonite Health Services and Mennonite Board of Missions. The loans, available from the Miller-Erb Nursing Development Fund, will be awarded in spring 1995. Funding awards range from $300 to $2,000 per study year. Applications and supporting data must be received by Feb. 1, 1995. Contact Amy Herr, Mennonite Health Services, 2160 Lincoln Highway East, Box 6, Lancaster, PA 17602-1150 or call (717) 293-7125.

Willis Busenitz, Busby, Mont. "You don't lose identity but take on a new identity."

"The other side of loyalty is vision," said John Yoder-Schrock, Henderson, Neb. "Our vision and mission must excite people to get involved and support the church. That will foster new loyalty."

The NDC home missions committee reported on two options for church planting. A group has been meeting in Omaha, Neb., and is anxious to begin a church. They are seeking support from both conferences.

The committee also reported the opportunity to begin work among the Hmong people in Minneapolis. A Hmong pastor with Mennonite credentials is ready to begin a fellowship if funding is available. Within minutes, delegates pledged about $13,000 to help pursue this project.

NDC approved an operating budget of $213,216 for the 1994-95 fiscal year. Giving to last fiscal year's budget fell about $14,000 short of the $199,698 goal. *Leroy Saner*

NDC discusses St. Paul church

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—At the joint meeting of the Northern District Conference and the Iowa-Nebraska Conference here June 16-19, delegates expressed strong feelings about the St. Paul (Minn.) Mennonite Fellowship's openness to homosexuals. The fellowship is affiliated with both the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

Many comments came in reaction to an anonymous letter that a select group of pastors from both conferences had received about 10 days prior to the conference. The letter asked for prayers for the fellowship members and the pastor as they charted new directions. The mailing included a copy of the program for a commitment ceremony between two lesbians and a bulletin from the fellowship that announced the upcoming ceremony.

Robert Hartzler, NDC conference minister, made it clear that while the pastor, Helen Quintela, had attended a private commitment ceremony for two women in a state park, she did not act in a pastoral capacity.

The St. Paul Fellowship "wants to be open and accept persons who have no place to go. There is no consensus in the fellowship on issues of homosexuality. These people are Christian in their orientation and belief. How much variety can we accept and tolerate in the Northern District?" he asked.

"Helen's ministry has been greatly appreciated," added Palmer Becker, home missions chair. The fellowship has "reached out to alternative peoples, including other races. Homosexuals have come, and the fellowship has ministered to them."

In November 1993 the fellowship members and leaders asked Hartzler to help them deal with the considerable dissension in their congregation over a variety of issues, including homosexuality, abuse, theological concerns, leadership and how decisions are made and who makes them. At least half the membership left the fellowship over the next two months as a result of their differences.

The NDC home missions committee, which provides funds to St. Paul Fellowship, decided to meet with the fellowship in March. The Iowa-Nebraska leadership board sent a representative to this meeting.

By April, the home missions committee had developed a set of guidelines for working with the issues at St. Paul Fellowship. Becker presented the guidelines to Quintela in April.

The guidelines address the need for the fellowship to develop clear expectations of its membership, job descriptions for the pastor and elders and a definition of its view on sexuality and its ministry to homosexuals, among other items. The home missions committee has accepted the General Conference Mennonite Church statement on sexuality, which states that homosexual sexual activity is sin.

Both the NDC home missions committee and the Iowa-Nebraska leadership board have indicated their willingness to continue to dialogue with the fellowship until a resolution is reached.

"The leadership board is committed to be a pastoral presence to St. Paul and Helen and Alberto [Quintela]. It will stand by them," said John King, Iowa-Nebraska leadership board member.

King noted that the primary issue is not homosexuality but the confusion caused by the response of the members who left the fellowship. "The gay issue is just the lightning rod for the struggles in the church. It may be best to relax and sort out the issues and focus on the real problem," he cautioned, noting that "we all experience the homosexual issue on different levels. As we respond, do not say them vs. us, because they are us."

Anonymous letter: But the delegate response was contentious, particularly as a number of people focused on the anonymous mailing instead of on the work of the home missions committee. "Homosexuality is a sin. God will not tolerate it. There needs to be a chance for repentance. One cannot condone it and take part in the ceremony," said George Kaufman, Zion Mennonite Church, Bridgewater, S.D.

Pat McFarren, Bethlehem Mennonite Church, Bloomfield, Mont., added, "I am disturbed by the content of the mailing more than the unsigned letter. If we stand by when wrong is done and say nothing, we condone it. I believe in love and kindness, but this is not an appropriate behavior for our church."

In a separate NDC session, Hartzler told delegates exactly what he thought about the unsigned letter. "I believe the anonymous mailing is of the evil one, meant to confuse and destroy. Our struggle is one of a spiritual nature," he warned. "My personal feelings are that we have allowed this mailing to cause much mischief. I challenge people who have a copy of that mailing to come up here and destroy it in this shredding machine."

Some appeared to heed his warning. "This letter short-circuited the work of the committee. I move we turn this issue back to the home missions committee and conference leadership," said Bob Engbrecht, Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D. The motion was carried with one dissenting vote.

The NDC executive and home missions committees expressed their willingness to hold a special midyear delegate meeting, if necessary, to deal with the issues raised by the St. Paul situation. *Carla Reimer*

LIFE project participation peaks

The Living in Faithful Evangelism project, launched in 1988, has involved 340 congregations in the United States and Canada.

The number of churches involved at one time peaked this spring when 155 congregations sent to LIFE staff their research projects which are part of the first-year experience. The LIFE team includes five paid staff and 1,000 volunteers. Both General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church groups have decided to join with the Church of the Brethren for a trial period in the Andrew Center. The center is a church growth and evangelism resource center that project planners hope will help churches carry on when the formal three-year LIFE process ends.

Darrell Ediger

LIFE team: *The LIFE Field Staff group (seated from left) are LeRoy Mullet, Marilyn Miller, Mary Jane Eby and Sandra Liechty, (standing from left) Dale Bauman, Louise Showalter, Irvin Schmidt and Thelma Horner. Not pictured is Leonard Garber.*

The 11th annual Mennonite Central Committee Oregon Fall Festival will be held Oct. 8 at Linn County Fairgrounds, Albany, Ore. Contact Faye Claassen, P.O. Box 1052, Albany, OR 97321.

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The United States sold or gave $31 billion in arms or training to some 140 nations in the first year of the Clinton administration. The figure is up sharply from the Bush years, when spending totaled $55 billion in 1988-92. The United States is filling markets abandoned by the former Soviet Union, whose sales fell from $23 billion in 1988 to $2.3 billion in 1992. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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***Mennonite Reporter* has reported on controversy surrounding a Hutterian Brethren elder who has purchased two handguns since 1991. Johann Christoph Arnold of the Woodcrest Colony in New York stated on an application for a gun that he wanted to acquire a weapon "for self-protection and protection of community members." "You have violated one of the fundamental principles of the Bruderhof and the Hutterian Brethren Church," wrote Arnold's relatives Balz and Monika Trümpi-Arnold in a Feb. 14 letter. They also wrote to Bruderhof leaders, claiming that the incident is another example of the unquestioned power wielded by the elder. Bruderhof members "do not dare to speak out" because they fear exclusion or excommunication. According to another source, some Bruderhof members say the revolvers were meant to get rid of rabid animals on the property. One person said the guns were returned to the store in March 1992, and the store verbally confirmed this, but the sheriff has no gun disposal document on file, nor has the permit to carry a concealed weapon been canceled. (*Gospel Herald*)**

"Many have asked me, 'Why have a film festival in the middle of a war?'" says Haris Pasovic, a theater director who organized a film festival in Sarajevo. "But they have it backward. The question is, 'Why have a war in the middle of a film festival?'" (*Salt*)

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MARC Newsletter reports that Protestant growth in Latin America may cause Protestantism to eclipse Catholicism there. If growth rates of recent years continue, Guatemala will have a Protestant majority in about 2001. Chile, Puerto Rico and Haiti will have Protestant majorities in 14 to 15 years.

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Nine out of 10 young people murdered in industrialized countries are slain in the United States. A UNICEF study reporting that finding was cited as the "top censored story of 1993" by Project Censored, a U.S. media research program, according to *Sojourners*. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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Andrei Kuznetsov, 22, is the first Russian to participate in the Mennonite Central Committee Canada summer Native gardening program. He joins 29 others who are serving in 12 northern Native communities and in Winnipeg this summer. Gardening was an important part of Kuznetsov's life growing up in Nizhni Novgorod (formerly Gorky), as it is for many Russians. "Our family has gardens outside the city," he says, noting that gardening is a welcome escape for city-dwellers in crowded apartments. "We grew enough food to sustain our family for the winter." Kuznetsov, who studies masters-level math at Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, learned about MCC in 1992 while a student at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. He is serving in Makkovik, an Inuit community on the southern coast of Labrador.

New conferences emerge on West Coast

Reedley, Calif. (GCMC/MC)—How do you merge two Mennonite Church (MC) area conferences and a General Conference Mennonite (GC) district?

With celebration, hours of work, some regret, a bit of fear, but mostly hope for the future.

That's how it went here June 23-26, when delegates from Pacific Coast Conference, Pacific District Conference, and Southwest Mennonite Conference met to disband their respective conferences and form two new groups: Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest.

Both PCC and SMC had been MC conferences. PDC had been a GC district. In the new lineup, Pacific Northwest is made up of 33 Mennonite churches in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Pacific Southwest's 44 congregations are located in California and Arizona.

How they did it: Delegates from the three conferences met first in separate sessions. Their business was routine, but they also talked about the reasons for the merger. Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, Clovis, Calif., who directed PDC's evangelism and church development, noted that more than 25 percent of that district's members are in dually affiliated churches started since 1988. "We promised our new people they won't have to learn all the complicated structures of two denominations," Ruth-Heffelbower said.

"This is like a marriage; we're not losing, we're gaining," PCC moderator Floyd Lapp, Molalla, Ore., said.

"PDC is splitting, and we will no longer have our old ties," said Duane Oswald, Fresno, Calif., moderator of PDC. "We need to acknowledge that this is difficult for us, that we are in a grieving process."

Great divide: The merger divides the former PDC at the California-Oregon border. Approximately half of PDC's congregations go north with the former PCC and half south with SMC. Former PDC assets of approximately $554,000 are also being halved.

All three conferences ended their last business session by voting on resolutions with legal language "to wind up and dissolve." Prayer and the singing of "606" culminated the history of PDC and PCC. SMC ended with prayer.

Three become two: After dissolving their respective conferences, delegates met in two separate sessions to adopt bylaws and elect leaders for the new conferences. For Pacific Southwest, this business came relatively easy. Discussions and decisions were more lengthy for Pacific Northwest.

The latter found it took time to incorporate two large, existing structures into their new organization. One is a high school—Western Mennonite at Salem, Ore. The second is the PCC mission board, which has a budget larger than that of the new conference.

Delegates from former PDC churches had to get used to the idea of a conference mission board. "The PDC tradition is for congregations to do their own missions," Marion Schrock, Salem, Ore., summarized. "PCC congregations have set up a board to do this work for them. We are going to have to be very patient with each other. It will take several years to sort out the details."

'PDC is splitting. ... We need to acknowledge that this is difficult for us.'

Oswald

Also troubling for some former PDC delegates was how representation to the new conference would be handled. PDC had allowed one delegate to cast more than one vote for a congregation; the new organization calls for one vote per delegate—the former PCC way.

Advocates for voting by congregational blocs noted this allowed decisions to be more representative of conference membership. Those choosing the one-delegate, one-vote method noted it would bring more people to conference sessions, where decisions can be made after due process.

In the end, Pacific Northwest delegates accepted the bylaws, which provide for one vote per delegate, with the provision that the discussion be reopened within three years, after experience as a new group.

This was also the solution for the Pacific Southwest in disagreement on a plan for three "regional area ministers" instead of one conference minister. Several delegates said part-time jobs just become full-time work.

Pacific Southwest delegates accepted the plan with the subject-to-review provision. They agreed to hire these area ministers, each for a third-time: Don Yoder, Chandler, for Arizona; Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower, Clovis, for northern California; and James Isaacs, Los Angeles, for southern California. (Isaacs is to be replaced in August, when he moves to Indiana.) Jeff Wright, Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., was named quarter-time conference coordinator.

Larry Hauder, Boise, Idaho, continues as conference minister full time for Pacific Northwest. Hauder had previously served both PDC and PCC in this capacity. Structure for both new conferences is parallel, with a 12-member board of directors, including a four-person executive committee. Each group has four "standing committees"—one each for leadership, evangelism and mission, peace and justice, and congregational nurture. Pacific Northwest has an additional "church schools committee" to relate to its high school.

Pacific Northwest elected John Willems, Albany, Ore., as moderator and adopted a budget calling for congregational contributions of $82,000. Duane Oswald, Fresno, Calif., was named moderator of Pacific Southwest, which adopted a $92,000 contribution budget.

The West Coast merger is the second set of MC/GC conferences to integrate. The first took place in 1988, when two MC groups and one GC district became the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada. *J. Lorne Peachey, with assistance from David Linscheid and J.W. Sprunger*

West Coasters want faster integration

Reedley, Calif. (GCMC/MC)—Relating to two sets of denominational structures surfaced as a concern of the new Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest conferences.

"We are meeting as a group of interested Mennonites on the West Coast ... with no conference affiliation," Duane Oswald said in opening an all-delegate meeting.

Vern Preheim, Newton, Kan., representing the Integration Exploration Committee (IEC), spoke to the group on churchwide integration. He said his committee is recommending denominational merger by the year 2003. Many were clearly unhappy with what they saw as a slow pace.

Jim Brenneman, Pasadena, Calif., asked, "Why have you put this off until 2003? I thought we were to integrate in 1995."

Preheim said that a decision on integration is scheduled for 1995. Implementation will take longer.

"We face a tightrope on this one," Preheim said. "While you are merging here on the West Coast, many congregations are saying, 'Don't rush this; bring the people along.' It's a matter of perspective on what is fast and what is slow.

"You have to remember it was much easier to integrate here on the West Coast than it will be for the two denominations."

No problem: He also noted the IEC recommendation calls for churchwide structures to integrate before 2003. Preheim said, "That will solve the problem for integrated conferences."

Preheim told the two new groups they now have two ways to make their voices heard on integration: to the General Conference triennial sessions through congregational delegates and to the Mennonite Church General Assembly through conference delegates. "You can double the impact," he said.

"And we will make our voices heard about integration," said Duane Oswald, Fresno, Calif., the new Pacific Southwest moderator.

"Both groups would probably also like to have our money," quipped John Willems, Albany, Ore., the new Pacific Northwest moderator, in telling his delegates their churches were now members of both the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. *J. Lorne Peachey*

Charitable giving across Canada by individuals was about $8.2 billion, according to Linda Mollenhauser of the Canadian Centre on Philanthropy. She said 45 percent of that figure went to places of worship. Two percent went to hospitals, 20 percent to teaching institutions and 33 percent to other charities. (*Christian Week*)

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The manufacturer of the pregnancy-terminating drug RU-486, Roussel-Uclaf, announced May 16 that it was turning over all U.S. patent rights to the New York-based nonprofit Population Council, which will seek a manufacturer. Clinical trials should start in early autumn, and approval by the Food and Drug Administration should come within 15 to 22 months, FDA commissioner David Kessler told a subcommittee of the House Small Business Committee. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Ben and Jerry's ice cream company is using social activists to promote its new line of smooth flavors. A poster features eight activists—Pete Seeger, Michelle Shocked, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Spike Lee, Carlos Santana, Dolores Huerta, Bobby Seale and Daniel Berrigan—all savoring various Ben and Jerry's flavors. Sales of the poster will benefit the Children's Defense Fund. Each activist will receive free ice cream for life. Kenneth Goodpaster, business ethicist at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minn., cites the company's ethical business practice. "They certainly do have a reputation for going the extra mile in terms of corporate responsibility. ... They're also very well known for their corporate giving and their efforts to share with the wider community," he said. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

Record

Youth from Langley (B.C.) Mennonite Fellowship got in touch with their roots while planting 2,300 fir trees near Coombs on Vancouver Island. The 21-member group returned home with a deeper understanding of the contributions made during World War II by Mennonite and Brethren in Christ conscientious objectors enrolled in the Alternative Service Program. "It connected them with their history," says Langley Fellowship pastor Henry Krause, adding that COs planted about 21 million trees in British Columbia during the war. The group was the first to participate in the commemorative tree-planting project initiated by the newly formed B.C. chapter of Seniors for Peace and supervised by the B.C. Ministry of Forests.

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The Southern Poverty Law Center, Montgomery, Ala., is investigating the Church of the Creator, a militant white supremacist group started by Ben Klassen, who was born into a Mennonite home in Russia and founded Church of the Creator paramilitary training camps in Toronto and the Fraser Valley in British Columbia. (See *The Mennonite*, July 27, 1993, p. 13.) Klassen was found dead of an apparent suicide by sleeping pill overdose Aug. 8, 1993. The SPLC reports that in July the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation arrested eight Church of the Creator skinheads and other white supremacists who were armed with automatic weapons, sawed-off shotguns and pipe bombs. The center reports that the skinheads planned to machine-gun parishioners of a black church in southeast Los Angeles and to assassinate prominent civil rights leaders. SPLC reports the church is now based in Florida and North Carolina. The center hopes to gather sufficient evidence to file a civil lawsuit against the church, in hopes of winning money damages for the group's victims.

MINISTERS

John Dye will begin this fall as pastor at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Reynold Friesen will begin this fall as assistant pastor at Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church.

Walter Friesen will begin in August as pastor at Hope Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

Jake Harms has ended as interim pastor at Springfield Heights Church, Winnipeg.

Peter H. Janzen is interim pastor at Bethel Church, Winnipeg.

Ken Karlenzig is interim pastor at Pineridge Christian Fellowship, Calgary.

Robin LaRue has resigned as associate pastor at First Church, Berne, Ind.

David Morrow will begin in August as pastor at Warden (Wash.) Church.

Ruth Naylor is summer interim pastor for Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Glen Nickerson is ending as pastor at MacGregor (Man.) Bergthaler Church this summer.

Don and **Elizabeth Plett** are pastors at Springstein (Man.) Church.

Glen Siemens is pastor at Plum Coulee (Man.) Church.

WORKERS

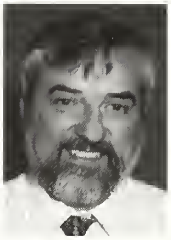
Cyndy and **Gari Brandt** will begin Aug. 15 as residence directors at Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute. As residence directors they will oversee school residence and serve as deans and campus chaplains.

C. Brandt

G. Brandt

Karen Deckert, First Church, Hillsboro, Kan., is music buyer for Faith & Life Bookstore, Newton. She replaces **Anita Bohn**, who retired.

Marv Frey, Winnipeg, has been named acting executive director of Mennonite Central Committee Canada beginning January 1995. He succeeds **John Dyck**, who has been interim executive director since July 1993.


Frey

Rachel Friesen, Tabor Church, Newton, Kan., was appointed manager of Faith & Life Bookstore, Newton, in March.

Mary Gaeddert, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., is copy editor for Faith & Life Press. She replaces **Edna Dyck**.

Lisa Schmidt, Buhler (Kan.) Church, is administrative assistant for Mennonite Voluntary Service. She replaces **Diane Fulkerson**.

Mountain View Mennonite Church, an established rural congregation nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains near Glacier National Park, is seeking a **full-time pastor.** Position open in November.

Send résumé to **Pastoral Search Committee, c/o Frieda Kauffman, 195 Two Mile Drive, Kalispell, MT 59901.**

Editor for ***Rejoice!***, a devotional guide serving the Mennonite constituency in North America. Quarter-time position. Responsibilities include recruiting writers for devotional material, editing and working with associate editors, overseeing printing and production, reporting to publishers. Qualifications: bachelor's degree, good knowledge of Bible and theology, experience in writing, editing and personnel management. Must be an active member of a Mennonite church and have acquaintance with the Mennonite community.

Send letter of application, résumé and your views on devotional literature to **Michael Dick, Board of Resource Ministries, #302-32025 Dahlstrom Ave., Clearbrook, BC V2T 2K7.**

Mennonite Central Committee (Akron, Pa.) is accepting applications for **magazine editor.** This salaried half-time position is available Sept. 1. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have four years print editor experience, ability to plan ahead, meet deadlines and make decisions while being open to counsel; must be able to connect with concerns of 25- to 40-year-old North Americans and be committed to popular communication of Christian responses to public issues. Three years of MCC or other service is preferred.

Interested people in the United States contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151;** in Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381.** Applications due **Aug. 1.**

Reviews

BOOKS

Free access

That All May Worship: An Interfaith Welcome to People With Disabilities *by Ann Rose Davie and Ginny Thornburgh (National Organization on Disability, 910 16th St. NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20006; 1992, 52 pages)*

Reviewed by Phil and Lois Palmer, North Newton, Kan.

"It's 10 times easier for me to buy a pizza or beer than to get into my synagogue," says a quote from *That All May Worship*. This handbook attempts to help make such comments no longer true. The book's stated purpose is "to assist congregations, denominational groups and seminaries to welcome people with disabilities into all aspects of worship and religious life."

The handbook provides ideas for getting started, creating general congregational hospitality and providing care for the primary caregivers.

The largest section deals with seven types of disabilities. Here the writers give suggestions for congregational action that are specific for each type of disability. The writers also give suggestions to guide personal interaction. Such personal touch suggestions are often missing from literature about disabilities.

The book is small, but the suggestions are many. Yet most suggestions are specific enough to seem possible. The lists for physical disabilities are more comprehensive and specific than the ones for developmental and mental disabilities. Groups will need further information to respond to developmental and mental disabilities. The resources section of the book will help, but it is small.

We would make one correction: The writers suggest 32-inch-wide doors for wheelchairs. Doors really should be at least 36 inches wide.

On page six there is this question: "What do you say when you meet a person with a disability?" The answer—"How about 'hello'?"—is a good place to begin. This booklet is a good place for congregations to begin.

Kindling Sunday school

Living the Beatitudes *by Abe Bergen (part of the Fast Lane Bible Studies series for junior high, Faith & Life Press, 1994, 76 pages)*

Reviewed by Melanie Mueller, Dave and Cynthia Linscheid, and the 7th-8th grade Sunday school class at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

BIBLE STUDIES FOR JUNIOR HIGH
FAST LANE
BIBLE STUDIES

We were desperate. We needed a course of study for our small group of precocious seventh- and eighth-graders that they wouldn't label boring or dumb. We were spending too much class time thwarting students' attempts to rehash *Saturday Night Live*.

We decided to try *Living the Beatitudes*, the second in the Fast Lane Bible Studies series, designed for junior high age youth. The table of contents encouraged us with attention-getting chapters like "Why Do Good If It Gets Me into Trouble?" "Me, a Peacemaker?" and "How's Your Heart Condition?"

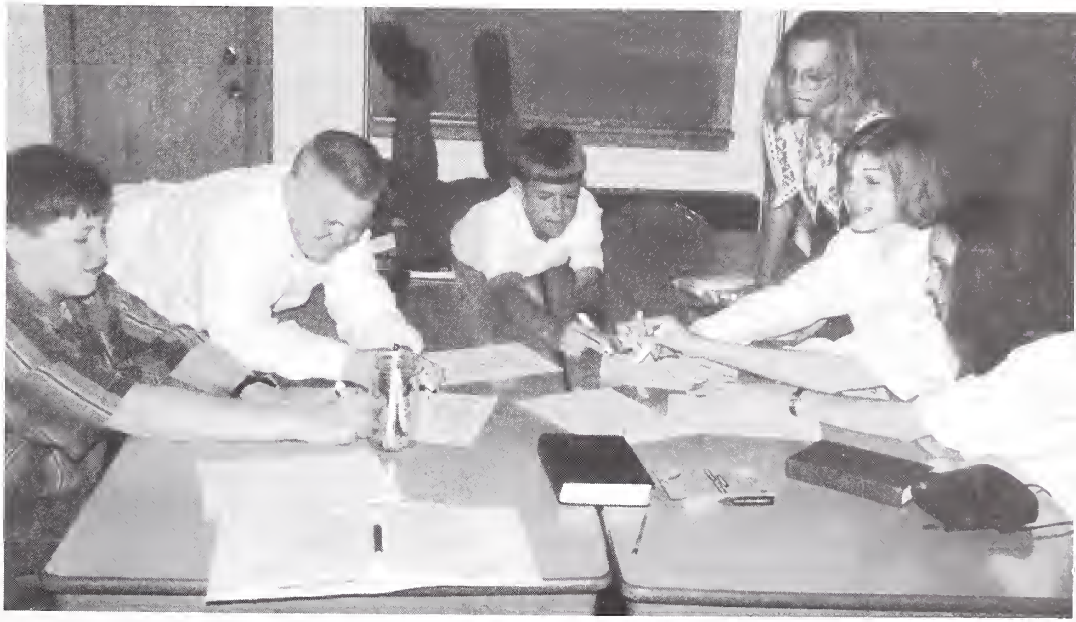
The lessons are planned to take you "from life to the Bible and back to life" through activities that first connect to the student's experience, then dialogue about the Bible passage and the questions raised in the beginning of the hour, and finally address application to everyday life. Each lesson has reproducible handouts that can either be used during the hour or taken home. A section titled, "Junior High Is Not a Disease!" provides helpful information on the age level and various learning styles.

Here is an example of a lesson plan:

1. Imagine a situation on a camping trip. One girl has invited her friend to go with her and her parents. The girls stay out way past their curfew; the parents are worried and have the park rangers out looking for them. At midnight the girls arrive safe and sound but don't understand why everyone is upset with them. Discuss.
2. Now read the beatitude, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" and discuss asking for forgiveness.
3. Brainstorm ideas that would give someone courage to deal with an unforgiven issue, or learn four steps on how to say you are sorry and practice these steps by using scenarios on the handout sheet, "Learning to Say 'I'm Sorry.'"

Before you know it, the hour is over. Each lesson offers several options for its various segments, so you can choose which suit your class best.

In preparing for this review we asked the members of our class what they liked about this course of study.



Dave Linscheid

Fast lane: *Jesse Woolery, Jesse Brubacher, John Kliewer, Rachel Stucky, Kate Brubacher and Katy June Friesen, students of the reviewers, work through* Living the Beatitudes *at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.*

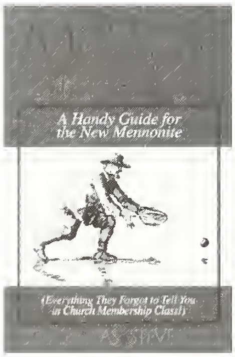
Debating issues scored high marks—even when kids were assigned points of view that were opposite what they believed. Our group didn't want to have anything to do with one suggested activity—learning body motions for each beatitude.

We would recommend this new study as a breath of fresh air for your junior high group.

Comic relief

The Mennonite Starter Kit *by Craig Haas and Steve Nolt (Good Books, 1993, 84 pages)*

Reviewed by Joel Kauffmann, Goshen, Ind.


A Handy Guide for the New Mennonite
(Everything They Forgot to Tell You in Church Membership Class)
AS STEVE

There are two rules for comedy I take seriously. One for critiquing it. The other for creating it.

Rule 1: I believe comedic books or movies should be judged not by their sum but by the poignancy of their parts.

By this measure *The Mennonite Starter Kit* by Craig Haas and Steve Nolt scores a 10.

Their 84-page booklet captures and improves upon the heritage-bashing that characterized gatherings of Muppies (see *Muppie Manual* by the same publisher) during the '80s (by the '90s most have moved on or matured).

Several lines alone are worth the price of admission, such as this one contrasting Russian and Swiss Mennonites: "Russian Mennonites write vivid disturbing poetry. Swiss Mennonites don't."

Almost all the lines draw laughs, and some even draw blood, such as the observation that "You're really a Mennonite when … you're a pacifist who voted for Reagan."

Rule 2: Those who create comedy should include themselves in the target zone. This is the thin line that separates healthy, healing humor from its more caustic cousins. Here Haas and Nolt fare less well. Their co-conspirators thanked in the foreword are almost exclusively an eastern enclave, and as one reads the book, the barbs directed westward seem decidedly more pointed than those pointed inward.

Perhaps the book's most savage jab is a parody of an ad from "Mennonites Bored of Missions, Elk's Heart, Indiana," featuring an ethnically mixed group of people. The parody dismisses MBM's portrayal of a global family as marketing: "We have an image to create, and you can be … part of it." Not funny, especially considering Lancaster's long-time reluctance to cooperate in churchwide efforts.

Still, this is an inspired book, and falling back on Rule 1, I highly recommend it.

Thirty years from now, after Mennonites have merged and mobilized globally, I hope (and I believe Haas and Nolt would agree) there will be a steady stream of new Mennonites who will find such a starter kit not only unnecessary but incomprehensible.

What is truth?

Is the Bible True? Understanding the Bible Today *by David Robert Ord and Robert B. Coote (Orbis Books, 1994, 132 pages)*

Reviewed by Gary F. Daught, Mather, Man.

Many Christians accept the "truth" of the Bible as self-evident, without bothering to ask in what way(s) it is true. Raising the question for some carries a suspicion that the authority of the Bible is under attack—that those who raise the question are trying to undermine faith. But the authors of this book insist the question must be grappled with if we are to understand properly the Bible and its message for today.

Ord and Coote have written this book for the layperson. With stories and an engaging style, they tackle issues that provoke people to ask about biblical truth. They properly suggest that laypeople have not had adequate access to the work of biblical scholars. This book intends to be a bridge between layperson and scholar. Biblical scholars, in fact, are not seeking to undermine faith. They are trying to make sense of their observations by delving into the ancient world reflected in the biblical text.

What happens when a layperson encounters conflicting details in, say, the Gospels? Should only the observations be questioned? Or should we also question the assumptions that make these observations so problematic. What were the intentions of the biblical writers? Is truth always and only to be equated with fact, or can truth also be conveyed in other ways? Must the Bible be inerrant in order for us to be able to say God inspired it? Ord and Coote approach these questions with integrity.

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(Lucius Annaens Seneca, 4 B.C. – 65 A.D.) – a Roman philosopher

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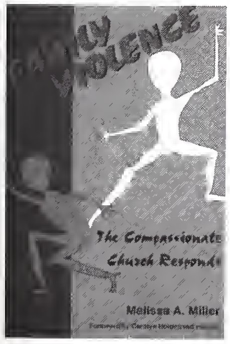
My only reservation is that the authors failed to deal as inductively with the Old Testament materials as they might have. The reader is apt to be confused by some of their reconstructions. However, I would still recommend this book for challenging us and forcing open the long overdue discussion of the Bible and truth in church and society.

The healing path

Family Violence: The Compassionate Church Responds *by Melissa A. Miller (Herald Press, 1994, 180 pages)*

Reviewed by Wanda Derksen Bergen, Abbotsford, B.C.

This book could not have come to my attention at a more timely moment, for I had just been asked to spend an evening with an extended family working through the tragedy of sexual abuse among them. Miller's book provided some excellent resources.



Miller's use of biblical stories and accounts as the basis for much of her discussion is helpful and powerful. Her analyses of the dynamics around family violence in the biblical accounts provide excellent tools.

A real strength of Miller's book is her chapter on "The Healing Path for Survivors." She shows sensitivity to the experience of victims/survivors. I appreciate her ability to respect and value survivors, stating that they "offer the gift of their remarkable faith journey to the church" and can lead "the church into new, deeper understandings of God, faith and healing." It is a tragedy when the church misses the opportunity to participate in the redemption of the survivor and recognize the great resources a survivor may have to offer. Miller quoted one person speaking of "making a shelter for my sorrow in my heart" as a way of learning to live with the abuse. The family and church also need to learn to live with the abuse as a part of their community. A crucial part of this is helping to restore dignity and self-worth to the survivors among them.

The weakness in the book comes with Miller's discussion on offenders. She is thorough on how to respond to a "repentant offender," as she names them, but only briefly touches on how to respond to an offender who is not authentically repentant. Her writing in this area does not portray adequately the wide spectrum of offenders that exists, and particularly lacks in-depth material on offenders who fall toward the strong predator end of the spectrum. The absence of more attention given to this may give the reader the impression that all offenders can be "repentant offenders" and experience recovery, whereas statistics suggest that some offenders are not curable. This could mislead churches and families who are working with predatory offenders.

Furthermore, some survivors may react negatively to her treatment of offenders, feeling she is not being realistic enough and is minimizing the seriousness of their predatory abusive behavior.

Finally, her discussion on forgiveness and reconciliation is crucial to family and church responses to the abuse of power. It appropriately challenges some of the models we have been taught in our family and church circles for years and promotes new understandings that could bring freedom, healing and renewal for survivors, offenders and all of us as we participate in human relationships.

Resources

- **If I Were Starting My Family Again** by John M. Drescher (Good Books, 1994, $6.95 U.S.) looks at practical ways to take the pressures off parenting.
- **The Fortunate Years: An Amish Life** by Aaron S. Glick (Good Books, 1994, $9.95 U.S.) describes the author's life in Lancaster County, Pa.
- **Doing Good Better: How To Be an Effective Board Member of a Nonprofit Organization** by Edgar Stoesz and Chester Raber (Good Books, 1994, $9.95 U.S.) contains guidelines and suggestions, along with stories from the authors' personal experiences.
- **Natural Connections** (Mennonite Central Committee and African-American Mennonite Association, 1994, free) contains faith stories from African and African-American Christians, plus study questions. Available from your nearest MCC office.
- **Why Didn't I Just Raise Radishes?** by Melodie M. Davis (Herald Press, 1994, $7.95 U.S./$10.95 Cdn.) offers meditations on the magic of everyday moments.

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Editorial

The power and witness of unity

It is time to stand up against a vicious spirit of condemnation that is pervading our society as well as the Christian church. This spirit seeks to label others as heretics and somehow outside of God's grace. It must be opposed.

You can hear the voice of condemnation everywhere. On my way to work, I've heard middle school students speak hateful, violent words to each other. I read about various groups clamoring for rights while others clamor against those rights. Even attempts at making speech more civil can become an oppressive use of "political correctness."

What's worse is the way Christians denounce one another. Labels fly: "fundamentalist," "radical feminist," "homophobic," "secular humanist," "anti-choice," "pro-abortion." And more. Yet so little effort is made to talk with one another and, more importantly, to listen.

Two recent examples illustrate the power and witness of unity when Christians take the time and do the work (and hard work it is) of listening instead of labeling.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) met June 10-17 in Wichita, Kan., and tackled some potentially divisive issues head on. One of these concerned a feminist conference held last year in Minneapolis. The conference, which drew 2,000 participants from 32 denominations (including Mennonite), was partly organized and paid for by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

For some the conference was a long overdue celebration of the role and status of women in Christian life and an opportunity to think of God in a feminine light. For others the conference turned into a bizarre celebration of lesbianism and goddess worship that included sensual prayers and a rejection of traditional Christian teachings.

The General Assembly Council Review committee met all week to work on the issue. The first thing the 57 committee members did was get to know each other—without talking about the conference. Then they met with advocates of different positions. Next they held a public hearing that allowed anyone to speak for up to two minutes. Then the committee gathered facts about the conference.

After five days and more than 50 hours of committee work, a resolution emerged that rejected some of the theology expounded at the conference but acknowledged that such problems were bound to happen occasionally at conferences involving people of different faiths. It rejected statements that seemed to ridicule traditional Christian teachings but supported the Presbyterians who attended the conference.

More time was given for people to respond to the resolution. When delegates finally voted on the resolution, it passed 516-4, a 99 percent approval. Delegates had begun the week divided and hurt and worried; they ended it holding hands and singing "Amazing Grace."

The Wichita Eagle praised the process in an editorial, saying, "... that's the way any community of people should handle its most difficult problems."

On the weekend the Presbyterians ended their annual conference, the Northern District Conference held its own. They encountered a similar problem. The district's home missions committee had been talking with St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship about theological differences regarding gay and lesbian members (see page 16).

Intense discussion: Some people had sent an anonymous letter to various church leaders condemning St. Paul Fellowship. Many feared trouble at the conference sessions. However, Robert Hartzler, the conference minister, stood up at one point and said that the committee was doing its work with the church, and that anonymous letters that seek to divide are "from the evil one." After an intense discussion the conference voted overwhelmingly to affirm the work of the committee, which will report its progress later. It was the right thing to do.

We have all heard jokes about the ineptitude of committees, yet God can and does use them. And God uses the process of talking together and listening to one another to bring unity and to witness to the world about peaceful ways of resolving differences.

In the Bible, Satan is called "the accuser" (Revelation 12:10; see also Zechariah 3:1). Labeling and condemning one another is the work of the evil one. God's Holy Spirit enables us to listen to different views, to perhaps agree to disagree, and to do so in love. When we do, the world will take notice. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

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The siege of love / p. 12

Women do theology / p. 13

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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Can the church and business be partners?

- What the church can learn from business (see page 3)
- The dream and the know-how (see page 7)
- Practical ways to link job and church (see page 8)

Prologue

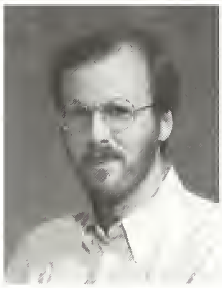
For too long the church and business have been at odds. Now they are talking and discovering that each of them has something to learn from the other.

Find out what the church can learn from business (beginning on page 3). Learn how one man received help from Mennonites in starting his own business (page 7).

"Bridge the Sunday-Monday Gap" (page 8) addresses a problem that plagues many of us. We tend to separate our daily work from our worship on Sunday. Our lives need to be dedicated to service of God, whether that be as a plumber or a pastor, a salesperson or a Sunday school teacher.

One group that has done much to help bridge this Sunday-Monday gap is Mennonite Economic Development Associates, with offices in Lancaster, Pa., and Winnipeg. For more information about this organization, call 1-800-723-7064.

In our Speaking Out piece (page 11), John Longhurst considers the benefits of having the church press report the failings of church leaders.



In her Learning to Pray column (page 12), Marlene Kropf discusses the importance of intercessory prayer as a church.

As you go about your business this summer, may you be aware of God's presence and blessing. *gh*

Next issue: Hungry and homeless in North America

Cover: Religious News Service photo

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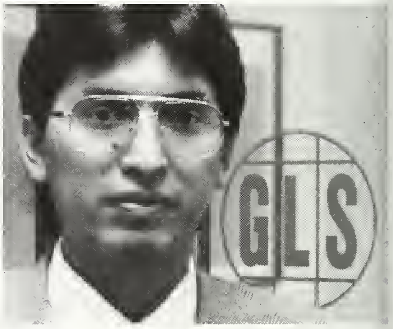

Brigg Lopez opened a business by faith, and a Mennonite group provided the training he needed.

8 Bridge the Sunday-Monday gap

How to bring your work to church

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General
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What the church can learn from business

Jim Smucker and Beryl Jantzi

A group of city youth went into the country for a weekend of camping. The novice campers were uncomfortable in this unfamiliar setting. To help put them at ease their leader organized a game of softball. But no one wanted to play in the outfield. Surrounding the field was a wooded area, and the youth imagined all manner of evil lurking in the trees and bushes. Afraid to turn their backs to the menacing forest, the streetwise ball players came upon the idea of playing in pairs. While one player concentrated on the game, a second person faced the other way, watching the woods. Each person and each duty was essential.

The new corporate model in business is based on community and servanthood, biblical concepts the church is supposed to be practicing.

The story, from Max De Pree's book *Leadership Is an Art*, has something to teach us. In today's complex world, business and the church need each other more than ever. Like the young players in the country, both need to work together and watch each other's backs.

We approach this discussion from our respective areas of training and experience. Jim is a partner in The Bird-in-Hand Corporation, a restaurant and hospitality business in Bird-in-Hand, Pa. Beryl is associate pastor at Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church, where Jim is also a member. Both of us have received graduate degrees in our own fields. Both of us have grown to appreciate the common threads of truth that have come out of our informal discussions on the church/business relationship.

We believe strongly that church and business are necessary partners, but in our tradition they have often seemed at odds. It seems both parties share the blame for a breakdown of trust and cooperation. In some cases, friction has grown out of misconceptions and/or misrepresentations of each other's respective roles.

Misconception one: The church holds a monopoly on truth.

Business and the church need to agree that knowledge has many sources. The church does not hold a monopoly on truth. The Holy Spirit does not come to one institution or tradition or cultural grouping but to individuals. And as these individuals pursue their various work disciplines, truth will come to the church from

Vision and decisions must come from the soul of the corporate body, be that body a church, family or business.

Dohn Fosh Photograph

their respective areas of training and experience.

The church has sometimes been arrogant about its understanding of truth. (Only last year, for example, did the Catholic Church finally concede that Galileo was right in declaring that the earth revolves around the sun and not vice versa.) The church has often forgotten that it does not own truth but is rather a recipient of truth, a broker, a watershed where all areas of knowledge can be brought together as part of the discerning process. Theology and biblical interpretation are not immune to human error; they need the help of other disciplines to understand the mind of God in our day.

This doesn't mean giving up our conviction that Jesus Christ is the full and final revelation God has given to his people. Jesus Christ works through people and experiences to bring this revelation to light. But as we work at faithful living and discipleship, we must listen to and respect wisdom from other sources.

Misconception two: Church leaders always know best.

Scripture and the 16th-century reformers assert that we are all to be priests. 1 Peter 2:9 says, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood." Our historic view of the "priesthood of all believers" elevates all believers to the task of ministry, not just in *doing* the work but also in deciding *how* it is to be done.

Today's churches, however, are more likely to see their pastor or denominational leader as a visionary who not only initiates but also implements the church's mission. Too many congregations put this load on the pastor, and too many pastors accept it.

Scripture certainly speaks of leadership (1 Corinthians 12, 1 Timothy 3), but not of the conventional CEO model that many churches have adopted. The preferred leader is not one who wields power from the top but rather one who works with and for the faithful. Vision and decisions must come from the soul of the corporate body, be that body a church, family or business.

Many companies have learned recently that employees "down the line" are often most in tune with the needs and wants of customers. Could it be that in the church our parishioners are more in touch with the pulse of our communities and effective ways to meet their needs? The church of the '90s needs to hear from and harness all its "ministers" to carry out the work of the kingdom.

A new business model? Jesus worked outside the formal religious circles of his day. His illustrations were taken from the business world of the times. He fashioned his message to connect with the merchant, the farmer, the fisherman and the financial executives of Judea and Galilee. Unlike the Pharisees and Sadducees, Jesus received the gentiles, elevated the status of women, identified with the poor and welcomed the sinner. He challenged the structures that oppressed. He was feared because he called for change, for inclusion, for breaking down barriers.

The new business model is also feared because it calls for change, for inclusion, for breaking down barriers. Much has been written about new ways to organize and lead. As we evolve toward flatter management structures with power in the team rather than the individual, it is getting increasingly difficult to distinguish the boss from the subordinate.

Yet many of us in church and business are still trapped in outdated methods based on scientific management, which arrogantly places people at the disposal of techniques and technology, and which sees people as robots on the proverbial assembly line. In this approach, responsibility shifts from worker to manager, student to teacher, lay person to preacher. This is the mindset of many organizations today.

The new business model sweeps away this outdated approach along with its fear, domination, unilateral decision making and heavy-handed manipulation. Instead, age-old values such as community, love, power-sharing, trust and servanthood receive prominence. To Christians this new business model appears strikingly familiar, so familiar in fact that you might think it has New Testament roots.

The ultimate paradox of the new business model may be that it is not so new after all.

Stewardship and love: Perhaps the new conception of leadership is best expressed as stewardship: leadership as a trust exercised for the benefit of all, where the leader serves the followers, guided by the higher purposes of the organization. The new leader, caring and respectful toward people, is willing to share power. Fear and domination are replaced by love.

Peter Senge in his book *The Fifth Discipline* suggests that "love is, of course, a difficult word to use in the context of business and management." He goes on to talk about the need for agape love in the workplace in developing a commitment to serve one another. The best definition of love, he says, is the "full and unconditional commitment to another's completion."

"Love in organizations," claims author Margaret Wheatley, "is the most potent source of power we have available."

According to Jesus, the greatest example of love is to lay down one's life for a stranger. Whether literal or metaphorical, this is a strong challenge to look beyond our own needs and rights to the needs and rights of someone else, maybe someone we do not even know.

Community: "For maximum productivity as well as maximum job satisfaction, full participation by all in the corporation as a learning community is essential," says Robert Bellah in *The Good Society*.

"We hunger for community in the workplace and are a great deal more productive when we find it," says Marvin Weisbrod in *Productive Workplaces*. "To feed this hunger in ways that preserve democratic values of individual dignity, opportunity for all and mutual support is to harness energy and productivity beyond imagining."

"So how about this for a new management bumper sticker: If you're not creating community, you're not managing" (James Autry, *Love and Profit*).

Behind the term "community" is interdependence. This means being available to give and being willing to receive. The industrialized nations of the West have long been accused of being less community minded and more individualistic. We delegate our needs and the needs of others to specialized institutions that society has set up to deal with our problems. As our agents, these institutions relieve us of the responsibilities once borne face-to-face by the community.

We find that the more value we place in our high-tech informationalized society, the more we need the flesh and blood interaction of caring individuals to convey love, acceptance and empathy. David wrote in Psalm 20:7, "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will trust in the name of the Lord our God." Horses and chariots were the high-tech resources of David's day. They represented power. But David knew that all the power in the world, if enacted outside the faith community, was empty and futile. We are social beings created by a God who wants companionship.

Today the business world is discovering this reality in the form of a paradox. To maximize productivity in our complex, highly technical world, we need to create the community of the first-century church. The irony is that while our churches are moving away from the New Testament model of community, our organizations are embracing it. "Business is already evidencing so much more interest in community than the church," claims M. Scott Peck in his book *A World Waiting to Be Born*. "Business will adopt community as a standard mode of operation for the sole reason that community is cost-effective."

Sharing power: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely," declares Lord Acton's famous maxim.

"In every sphere, 'centers' are being discredited—from the decline of the superpowers to mistrust of national governments to attacks on nonvalue-adding corporate headquarters," says author Rosabeth Moss-Kanter.

Jesus made it abundantly clear to his disciples that his concern was not to centralize power around himself but to empower others, to distribute authority and ownership to those who understood his message. A prime example is the Great Commission.

It is human nature to hold on to authority and to centralize control. The divine model, however, empowers the powerless and involves others in the task of kingdom building.

The new model calls for sharing power. Max De Pree observes that information is power, "but it is pointless power if hoarded. Power must be shared for an organization or a relationship to work."

Central to power-sharing is respect for the value of each person as well as a pragmatic sense of future business survival. "When we—you, me, everybody—genuinely approve of ourselves and are well-informed, we can afford to be responsive to the

To maximize productivity in our complex, highly technical world we need to create the community of the first-century church. The irony is that while our churches are moving away from the New Testament model of community, our organizations are embracing it.

The reality today is that the leader will not always lead from the front; in times of uncertainty, a significant part of a leader's role is finding ways of "releasing the sleeping genius" in others.

needs and wants of others," says Carl Sewell, an author and businessman. People who feel powerless or who don't think they are valued don't care much about the problems of others. In today's highly competitive service-oriented economy, this type of attitude is a prescription for disaster.

Trust: Trust is risky business. It implies that people deserve a chance to prove themselves.

Jesus showed an enormous amount of trust in his disciples. Peter, Thomas, Judas Iscariot—these handpicked men all disappointed Jesus at some point, yet we get a clear picture that he was ready and eager to trust again if they would but acknowledge their error and start over.

All relationships are built on trust. And sound relationships are at the heart of business success in the '90s.

"Lack of trust at all levels curtails innovation and market opportunities," claims Douglas McGregor. De Pree adds that "long-lived and productive relationships spring up from a soil rich in covenants and trust."

It seems ironic that so much business training today still focuses on so-called "hard" issues of balance sheets and bottom lines, when what we desperately need is increased emphasis on the "softer" issues of communication, developing shared vision and creating trust. The reality today is that the leader will not always lead from the front; in times of uncertainty, a significant part of a leader's role is finding ways of "releasing the sleeping genius" in others.

Servanthood: "The greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:26-27).

"I believe bosses like you are, at your best, servants to the people who do the real work" (T. George Harris, editor of the *Harvard Business Review*).

The towel and basin symbolize Jesus' ministry. No task was beneath him. But neither was there any doubt as to who was in charge. Voluntary servanthood demonstrates a strength of character that is contrary to conventional wisdom but that connects with the common person like nothing else. Jesus exuded this quality, and it attracted a loyal following. The servant model leads by example and invites others to share in a vision that includes all and conveys a commitment to quality relationships.

During times of tumult many leaders look around for people to blame. Exasperated managers complain, "If I could just get my people problems worked out, things would be much better." A big challenge for leaders is to acknowledge that change begins with them. The problem most often lies within, not out there.

In an age where power and manipulation are seen as tools for getting ahead, it is interesting to note the repeated and fervent cries for servant leadership emanating from the new business model.

"Servant-leaders are healers in the sense of making whole by helping others to a larger and nobler vision and purpose than they would be likely to attain for themselves," says Robert Greenleaf.

"We need to develop and lead organizations that enhance life, taking the role of the nurturing servants," writes Robert McNight.

In our attempts to produce lasting change in our workplaces and churches, we must keep in mind that nothing very worthwhile was ever accomplished by fanatics and moralists. Instead it is the leader as servant who gently helps individuals discover their own uniqueness and find ways of attaching it to some endeavor above and beyond themselves.

Lessons: The gap between business and the church is being bridged, though perhaps slowly. What are some lessons we can learn from each other?

1. The convergence of New Testament truths and the new business model are striking, and the paradox seems clear. We cannot run 21st-century organizations on 19th-century thinking. We must run them on first-century truths.

2. If the New Testament can be relevant for Sunday and Monday mornings, pastors should have the confidence that what they say in the pulpit Sunday morning is not out of touch with what laypeople experience Monday morning. The Bible is just as relevant for the business world as the latest Tom Peters best-seller.

3. Establishing our workplaces as communities of personal growth is profitable. However, there is clearly a higher human destiny than selling our souls to organizations. Here is where the church can provide a context to create people-building institutions based on faith. Without our faith, the ideas of the new business model can merely become a fad, something to enhance yet again the bottom line until something better comes along.

4. Business has much knowledge to share with the church, especially in the area of responding to stakeholders. Due to market demands, business must keep reinventing itself or die. Our church organizations, on the other hand, historically have not felt the same urgency.

5. The church and business should help each other put an end once and for all to the Sunday-Monday dichotomy. Certainly each of us has our specific roles for "building up the body," but we must all understand that our most important calling is to be believers in a fallen world.

6. We need to be tolerant of each other. Both business and church are caught in a riddle: We realize that the old institutions and ways are working badly, but the momentum is so powerful that it inhibits our quest for a new model that will more effectively deal with our current realities.

This article is reprinted with permission from The Marketplace, *May/June 1994.*

The dream and the know-how

Brigg Lopez opened a business by faith, and a Mennonite group provided the training he needed.

Brigg Lopez didn't know it would be so hard to find a job when budget cuts eliminated his position with a Mennonite church agency. He sent out 300 résumés and promptly began collecting rejection letters. "Overqualified," they said.

Fluent in both English and Spanish, Brigg bought a desk for $10 and began doing translation work at home.

As the bills from a family medical problem piled up, Brigg decided to set up a full-fledged translation business in Lancaster, Pa. He saw a potential market: the city's Spanish-speaking population was growing, and local companies were planning to get more involved with Mexico through the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement.

"I decided by faith to open a business" he says.

Traction for a shaky business: *Brigg Lopez*

INTERNATIONA
TRANSLATION
AND
INTERPRETER
SERVICES
GLS

MEDA

A Mennonite friend loaned him $1,000. Brigg rented a small office, but it was so sparse it scared away his first customer.

Brigg persisted. Some large local manufacturers hired him to translate technical materials. He got a contract to handle translation for the local court system. He started getting requests for services in other languages.

Brigg advertised in the local paper for more translators. "The ad ran when there were a lot of people unemployed," he says. "I got 150 applicants. I picked 25."

Then it hit him. "How will I manage 25 people?" Brigg was well educated, with a degree in communications from Goshen (Ind.) College and further study at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Ind.) and Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. "But I had absolutely no knowledge of how to run a business," he says. "I knew nothing about profit and loss, about balancing books."

He remembers the frustration. "I would go home and cry. Many times I desperately wanted to close."

Local businessperson Dale Weaver told Brigg about the new ASSETS program operated by Mennonite Economic Development Associates. Although his business was already running, Brigg signed up and found the training course a big help in learning the basics.

"When I brought in someone to do my books I could watch and it made sense," he says. Before long he was doing his own books and now brings in a professional only once a quarter.

Today Brigg's company, Global Linguistic Systems, offers translation services in 18 languages, including French, German, Russian, Japanese and Serbo-Croatian.

For Brigg, ASSETS provided traction for a small business that was shaky on its feet. "For anyone who has a dream of having their own business, ASSETS can provide the essentials, the foundation," says Brigg.

"You know how many people out there have dreams?" He tells of friends who opened a Mexican restaurant but closed it within two months. "They had the dream but they didn't have the know-how. ASSETS helps provide the know-how."

Many people don't realize their workplace is an important place of ministry because they haven't had the right help in making the Sunday-Monday connection.

Bridge the Sunday-Monday gap

How to bring your work to church

How can your church demonstrate its interest in the jobs of its members? How can "ordinary folk" connect their weekday work with faith?

Many churches affirm members for assignments in the congregation, like Sunday school teachers and deacons. Why not do the same for those who minister beyond the congregation in daily work?

Though often overlooked as a place of ministry, the workplace is where most adult members spend the bulk of their time. As *Marketplace* columnist James M. Harder has observed, the church's greatest link with the secular world is through the jobs of its members.

Here are some ways churches can empower their members by saying, "We care about the work you do."

Update the church directory: William Diehl, former sales manager of Bethlehem Steel, says his church's parish directory lists every member's occupation alongside the usual information ("occupation" is understood as "that which occupies their time," so the listing is not limited to paid jobs). This directory makes it easy to call together members around certain issues.

For example, the church wanted to gain clarity on issues in public education. It called together all the church members who were in any way connected with the education system—teachers, administrators, secretaries, school bus drivers, cafeteria workers, school board members, PTA leaders. The church wanted to know: "What are the tough issues you face, and how can we help you?"

On a subsequent Sunday all these people were asked to sit together in a block during worship and the pastor held a short service of affirmation for them. The rest of the congregation was invited to stand together to pledge support for those who worked daily in a ministry of education.

Diehl says the church he attends holds special services like this every spring and fall, focusing on a different segment of the working world (health-care workers, business, law, public servants, homemakers). The pastor calls on members from the various groups to help design liturgies related to their ministry of work.

Put Labor Day to work: This September weekend is an ideal time to highlight jobs. Some churches encourage members to wear their work clothes or uniforms to church. Others bring symbols of their daily work for a special display (tools, computers, datebooks, mops, bedpans). It's a way of offering our daily work to the Lord.

Special bulletin covers can be devised. Congregations have borrowed illustrations from Mennonite Economic Development Associates' magazine *The Marketplace* to reprint. A Baptist church in Dallas tailored its Labor Day bulletin to local members' careers. The cover featured the occupations of parishioners—including musician, doctor, pastor, tour guide and, since this was Texas, cowboy.

Busy bulletin boards: One church secretary scans community periodicals and clips out any mention of anyone from her church and posts it on a bulletin board in the foyer. These include job promotions and achievements—anything that shows what her fellow members are doing in the community.

A good assignment for a youth group is to dispatch several amateur shutterbugs to photograph members in their primary place of endeavor, whether it be a job, a volunteer position, retirement or homemaking. These can then be mounted on a display or published in the church newsletter to inform one another and to affirm people's daily ministries.

A visit from the pastor: Does your pastor visit members at work? Has he or she been invited?

William Diehl's pastor dropped by his workplace one day to get an idea of what Diehl did all day. "We didn't talk about church at all," says Diehl. "He just observed what I was doing." Since the pastor wore his cleric's collar, Diehl's staff was curious. A few wondered if their boss was in some kind of trouble. Later Diehl explained to them, "My pastor was here to learn more about my ministry in this place."

Not every worker has the flexibility for this kind of pastoral visit. In those cases Diehl's pastor suggests bringing a brown bag and joining the worker for lunch.

The more pastors know about the work of their parishioners, the better equipped they are to deliver sermons

Vada Snider

relevant to daily life.

Worship connection: Encourage your congregation's worship leaders to include workplace connections when they can. Better yet, locate actual resources yourself. Overworked worship leaders will appreciate the help.

Develop your own liturgies and songs if you have skill in those areas. "When was the last time you heard a hymn that dealt with daily work?" says Robert Banks, a laity expert at Fuller Theological Seminary. "We need some new songwriters."

Missionary topspin: Most churches have special missions emphases during the church year. Why not include a workplace topspin? Many missions organizations have an occupational dimension. For example, construction trades have a natural link with Habitat for Humanity and Mennonite Disaster Service. Business and professional people have a link through Mennonite Economic Development Associates. Many other mission thrusts have special needs for health-care workers, educators, tentmakers, farmers and printers. All of these occupations can be celebrated in the context of mission.

Congregational retreat: A good way to empower people in a ministry of daily life is through lay retreats where intensive attention can be paid to individual gifts and callings. For best results these should be small (no more than 25 to 35 people). Experienced retreat organizers suggest that invitations should be sent out by colleagues rather than professional church staff, to make the event as nonthreatening as possible. The emphasis can be on sharing job-related pressures and understanding how one's life in the workplace can be brought under the lordship of Christ.

Many people don't realize their workplace is an important place of ministry because they haven't had the right help in making the Sunday-Monday connection. Says one expert: "My experience has been that out of 25 or 30 people you will always have two or three or four who will later say, 'That was a real turning point in my life.'"

Form a small group: Retreats can lead to forming longer-term fellowship groups around the theme of workplace ministry. These can become entry points for nonbelievers. Again, lay people should do the inviting.

When starting, it is often helpful to set short time limits: "Let's try it for six months." Open-ended commitments threaten some people.

These are just a few ideas to try. Why not propose some of them to your church leaders, and volunteer to help implement them? Let us know of other methods you've used to strengthen the Sunday-Monday gap.

Reprinted with permission from The Marketplace, *May/June 1993.*

For more ideas...

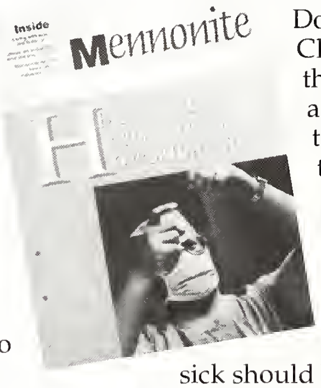
If you need grist for a retreat or small group discussion, here are some excellent resources:

- Mennonite Economic Development Associates, 1-800-723-7064.
- *Thank God It's Monday* by William E. Diehl (Fortress Press, 1982). Judson Adult Elective Series has an accompanying leader's guide that can be ordered from American Baptist Church National Ministries, P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851.
- *The Monday Connection: A Spirituality of Competence, Affirmation and Support in the Workplace* by William E. Diehl (HarperCollins, 1991).
- *Linking Faith & Daily Life: An Educational Program for Lay People* by Robert E. Reber. This is a plan for a more extensive retreat and follow-up sessions. Participant packets and a leader's guide available from the Alban Institute, Suite 433 North, 4550 Montgomery Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814-3341.

Letters

Christly health care

I read with interest the article "An Opportunity the Church Dare Not Ignore" (May 10 issue). This statement caught my attention: " … without government intervention the needed changes [in supplying adequate health care] do not occur." This is not true. Needed change comes from the body of Christ living the Sermon on the Mount.


Inside

Mennonite

As followers of Jesus we have an obligation to give Caesar his tax but not to participate in the enactment or collection of that tax. Our responsibility is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and care for the sick. We must not settle for the good of influencing legislation and thus miss the best of directly putting our hands to care for the poor.

"Mennonite congregations are not immune to the lack of universal health care," states the Health Dialogue Steering Committee. "A recent survey showed that in an average Mennonite congregation of 100 people, 14 do not have health insurance." Is this an indictment of our country's health-care system or of our congregational commitment to the uninsured? Legislating care leads to a false trust in government intervention. We need to take total responsibility for the needs in our communities.

Please consider these alternatives:

1. Let us reclaim health care as the church's right, not the government's responsibility.
2. We could start church-organized health-care cooperatives.
3. Our congregations could provide insurance for the poorer members of their congregation. The Mennonite Mutual Aid Sharing Fund is one resource.
4. Neighbors, church members and the poor may need us personally to pay their health-care bills.
5. We could ask our lawmakers to include conscientious objection in the health-care bill.

I urge you as individuals, congregations, conferences and agencies to reconsider your position. These alternatives may appear to accomplish less on a global scale. But by living the Sermon on the Mount we remain, on an eternal scale, consistent with the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. *Jeffrey C. Long, Ephrata, Wash.*

After reading your May 10 issue of *The Mennonite*, I was surprised that you supported the Clinton health-care plan to a large extent. Do you really think that the Clintons have the good of their country at heart when a large part of the plan is taxpayer-financed abortions on demand?

One article says that the level of civilization in a nation can be determined by how well the elderly and sick are cared for. Even if that's true, the sick should be cared for by their families, the elderly by their children. Do you think that if people refuse to do that, the government can increase the level of civilization in a nation by making laws that says that everybody can have free health care?

Health care is not a right, for if it were, then what wouldn't be? You need food to live, so isn't food a right? How do you get food? Money. How do you get money? A job. So isn't a job a right? And who institutes and insures all these rights? The government, of course—savior from all societal ills. How would the government do all this? Money. And where would they get all the money? Higher taxes. Can you show me a nation that has ever taxed itself into prosperity?

Take Canada. One article says that "we could learn a lot from our Canadian brothers and sisters if we would only ask them and listen." We certainly could. I heard a man from Canada on the radio who had been sick or injured say that he told the government hospitals about it and he waited and waited, but he wasn't very high on the list, and of course the government is never efficient, so finally he came to the United States. He got his health care.

If Clinton wanted only to help the sick and injured people who couldn't afford health insurance, then why are doctors who practice privately outlawed under the Clinton Health Plan? Why not just tax everyone and give "free" health care to those who wanted it? I'll tell you why. Because Clinton is more concerned with a government takeover of the economy than he is with helping people.

It is certainly a Christian's duty to help out voluntarily those in need but not to set up a society where the government robs all the people to provide an inefficient service that 85 percent of the people already have in much better quality, and that some of the other 15 percent could have if they wanted it but choose not to. *Nathan Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

Keep the peace

I would like to give a resounding "Amen" to the recent letters to *The Mennonite* by Leann Toews (May 24) and Erwin C. Goering (June 14) concerning the dismissal of Robert Hull as secretary of peace and justice by the Commission on Home Ministries.

I am unable to understand the reasoning that prompted this action. If it were impossible to find a qualified person to fill this position the action might be more understandable. But since this position is currently filled by an extremely competent person, I fail to see the motive.

If the reason for this action is strictly a budget matter, has any thought been given to the possibility that this action could have a negative impact on contributions from people that feel that eliminating this position weakens our witness?

I would like to know how this decision was reached and whether it is possible that this action could be reversed. *Waldo Waltner, Moundridge, Kan.*

Editor's note: All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.

Send letters to: *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Speaking out

Air out the dirty laundry

The church press should report church failings.

John Longhurst

Judging by recent letters to a number of church periodicals, many readers are tired of seeing stories about fallen leaders.

While many readers believe that the church has to be open and honest about its failures, other disagree. Some write letters to editors of church publications pleading for an end to stories about failings.

I too will be happy if I never have to read another article about a fallen leader. But if it happens again, I want the church press to report it.

Why do I feel this way? Because when my agency had to deal with the moral failing of an ex-employee, the church press made it easier—not harder—for everyone involved.

When news of the situation was first revealed late last year, one of the first decisions we made was to tell the church press as soon as possible. On the face of it, this hardly seems like a kind thing to do to the offender—why compound the man's agony? Why make his failing plain for all to see? Hadn't he suffered enough?

Instead of trying to add to his suffering, we were hoping to lessen it. By inviting the church press to be first to break the news, we hoped it would diminish the amount of interest the nonchurch media might take in the story.

It worked. A few weeks after the story appeared in several church publications, a national wire service reporter called. She had heard a little about the story, and wanted to know more. I was happy to be able to tell her she could find everything she needed in the church press. I even offered to fax her a copy.

Her interest in the subject quickly waned. "That's all right," she said. "No need to do that." Then she said goodbye.

I later learned a short news item based on the story published by the church press went out on the wires. But it never developed into a full-blown story. Why? Because the story had already been broken. There was no scoop—nothing hidden to uncover, no secrets to unearth.

> **I too will be happy if I never have to read another article about a fallen leader.**

There are several insights to be gleaned from this experience.

1. Because the church press had already published the story, the nonchurch media was disarmed. That is, there was no opportunity to expose a dark secret—the church had already brought the matter to light. The strongest questions in the media's arsenal are, "What are you hiding?" and, "If you knew, why did you cover it up?" By being immediately forthcoming and honest, there is no opportunity for these dreaded questions to be asked.

2. There are no secrets. The undertone of many critical letters is the belief that if we don't say anything, the world won't notice. This belief is wrong. There are no secrets. Someone in the media knows someone who goes to a Mennonite or Baptist or any other church who knows that something happened to cause a church leader to step down. Reporters are enterprising people. They know how to find stories—that's their job.

3. The world is watching the church. Ever since the Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart scandals, the media has been tuned to the church and the possibility of scandal. This is partly due to the fact that one result of those scandals was the belief that the church could not be trusted to police itself. Whatever the reason, we should be glad the media is watching us, for if the time ever comes when the media stops seeing the moral failure of church leaders as newsworthy—that is, as something uncommon or unusual!—we will be in great trouble.

4. By breaking the story in the church press, the event can be placed in a framework of Christian concern and community. A public relations axiom maintains that the first person or organization to break the news gets to set the framework—everyone else must react to the initial disclosure. It is much better to initiate coverage than to have a reporter call out of the blue to ask hard questions. It is greatly preferable to see an article headlined, "Church leader confesses failure; church calls for prayer" in the church press as opposed to, "Sexpot preacher abuses young girl" in a tabloid newspaper.

5. By sharing bad news, the church demonstrates that it practices what it preaches about truth. Truth-telling is the cornerstone of the church. But if the church cannot be trusted to tell the truth, what can it be trusted to do? An open and honest approach tells the world that if we can be trusted to tell the truth about things that pain us so deeply, we can be trusted in other things as well. If you do not believe this to be true, talk to people who used to belong to some denominations where abuse by leaders was rampant and unchecked for years. These people talk about how their trust in the church was violated. Sometimes they no longer trust God either.

> **But if it happens again, I want the church press to report it.**

Nobody wants to see more articles about failings in the church press—including editors of church periodicals. But when failings occur, it is heartening to know that there is a way to deal with the pain in an open and honest way in a context of Christian care, concern and community.

John Longhurst directs media relations for Mennonite Central Committee in Canada.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Mennonite*.

Learning to pray

Join the siege of love

God comes to us through the requests we make in prayer.

Marlene Kropf

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

I remember the Wednesday evening prayer meetings well. After a few hymns and a Bible study, we all knelt to pray. From around the room various saints lifted their voices and "let [their] requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6). We prayed for the sick and dying; we prayed for the rulers of the land; we prayed for those who had fallen away from the faith; we prayed for the missionaries; sometimes we prayed for peace.

As a child, I understood that intercessory prayer was a vital part of the Christian life. It was a simple transaction: We asked and God acted.

Later, of course, I discovered that intercessory prayer was more mysterious than I had at first imagined. God's actions weren't always understandable. We prayed for the healing of a young father who was ill with leukemia; he died anyway. For years we prayed for wayward people to return to the church; they never came back. The missionaries seemed to do just fine, but the rulers of the land always seemed to be in trouble. Why didn't God answer or intervene or heal as we requested?

Act of love: Many years passed before I began to comprehend the paradox of human freedom and divine sovereignty. And even though I still live with unanswered questions about prayer, I find myself returning again and again to the ministry of intercession. Perhaps one of the most significant shifts in my practice of prayer occurred when I realized that we do not begin the process of intercession. Douglas Steere says in a March-April 1989 article in *Weavings*, "When I enter the prayer of intercession, I do it with an acute realization that I am only adding my caring to the cosmic love of a God who cares." When we pray for others, we join the "siege of love" that already flows from the heart of God.

Act of communion: My experience of intercessory prayer changed again when I understood that to be overly concerned about the results of prayer betrays a misunderstanding of the fundamental purpose of prayer. Prayer is not about effectiveness or productivity; prayer is about relationship. God welcomes our praying and wants to be with us in our concerns for other people and our world.

Why didn't God answer or intervene as requested?

Act of conversion: Further, prayer-as-relationship transforms both individuals and communities. As we pray we are drawn into God's way of seeing ourselves and the world. More and more our hearts begin to beat with God's own pain and longings. We begin to desire what God desires. Just as Jesus was transformed by the experience of prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, we may also expect to be changed by prayer.

Act of hope: Finally, prayers of intercession are an act of courageous hope. Faced with the world's suffering and our own inadequate resources, we often despair. Yet we follow a God who promises to make all things new. In an October 1990 article in *Sojourners*, Walter Wink says, "Intercession is spiritual defiance of what is, in the name of what God has promised." When we join in prayer with God's siege of love, we also become part of the new creation that God is bringing about in the world.

How, then, do we fulfill our call to intercede for others?

1. Some people find lists to be useful. As they become aware of others' needs, they write them down in a journal or keep a list attached to a magnet on their refrigerator. In a daily time of prayer, they hold each person before God and pray for their well-being.

2. Other people do not function as well with lists. Instead they ask God to bring to mind those whom the Spirit is calling them to remember. While driving to work, reading the daily paper, or listening to the evening news, they sense the Spirit's prompting and pause to join God's work of love in the world.

3. Many families and small groups commit themselves to regular times of intercessory prayer. One family keeps a "prayer box" at the kitchen table. Inside the box are pictures of family, friends, church workers and clippings from the newspaper. At the end of the meal, children and parents draw an item from the box and pray on behalf of others.

Call to fidelity: The invitation to be intercessors is a call to faithfulness and love. We can't always see or know why we are called to prayer or what the results of our prayer will be. Prayer remains a mystery. When he was questioned once about why he continues to pray, Anglican archbishop William Temple said, "All I can say is that when I pray, coincidences happen, and when I don't, they don't."

Just this week a friend told of being awakened during the night with a compelling urge to pray for her young adult daughter, who was driving to another state. She prayed for her protection and safety and returned to sleep with a sense of peace. The next day the daughter called to report that she had been stranded most of the night on an interstate highway with a car that wouldn't run. How grateful my friend was to have been part of God's love surrounding her daughter during the night.

Whether or not we meet for prayer meetings on Wednesday evening, we are called to love others by praying for them. How are you joining God's siege of love in the world?

Annual Report 1994

AMBS window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Reflection points to the future

As I reflect on activities at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in the past year, I find myself looking forward, not backward.

Each of the efforts we engaged in during the 1993-94 year positions AMBS to better serve the church in the future—both your congregation and the church as a whole.

Strengthening the curriculum

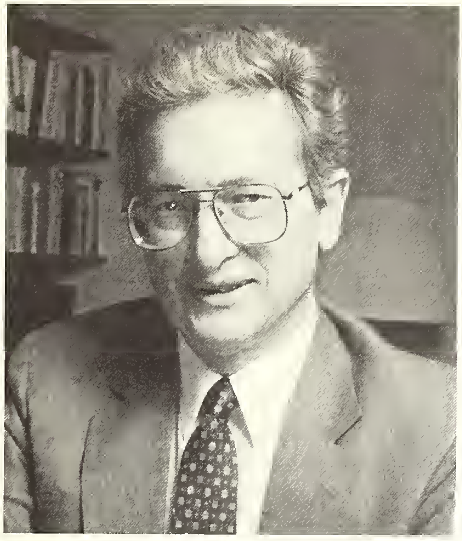
This fall we begin a new plan of study for the Master of Divinity degree that strengthens preparation for pastoral ministry. We also now offer a pastoral care and counseling concentration, a three-year M.Div. program that will prepare people to counsel others struggling with life experiences and questions of faith.

This effort grows out of a major review of our curriculum that included reevaluation of Anabaptist traditions and perspectives on pastoral ministry. We also worked with church leaders to project ahead. We asked, "What is the mission of the church in the next 10-15 years? What resources are needed?" We then built on strengths at AMBS as well as giving attention to concerns and emerging needs.

Nurturing pastors and church leaders

The AMBS continuing education program keeps growing, providing refreshment for pastors and church leaders. Pastors' Week in January was particularly noteworthy. Its theme, "The Healing Body of Christ," created opportunities for pastors to examine the Bible's and the church's approach to healing. It also helped participants experience healing for themselves.

The continuing education program will get a significant boost this fall. We will complete renovation of the AMBS dormitory, creating a learning center. The classrooms, meetings rooms and dining facilities will be used for AMBS activities; they also will be available for other church groups to use.


Howard Zehr

Calling people to church vocations

The biggest challenge facing the church and AMBS is meeting the growing need for church leaders. The Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church will need approximately 100 new pastors each year for the next ten years—and this does not reflect needs for teachers, missionaries, evangelists and church planters.

Declines in enrollment at AMBS and in enrollment of Mennonites in all seminaries contribute to this challenge. Not only do the declines place stress on AMBS , they also signal a major challenge for the entire church.

The AMBS board is addressing this crisis and has named a committee of board members to focus on recruitment concerns. However, the responsibility to help people consider and prepare for church vocations also lies with families, pastors and congregations. This is crucial not only for the future of the seminary, but for the future of the church as it carries out its mission around the world.

Working as partners

The partnership between AMBS and congregations in the last year helped 24 graduates begin new service in the church. Your support through prayers, contributions, and encouragement is invaluable. I pray that God will continue to bless this partnership and bring fruit to the work AMBS and congregations are doing together.

Marlin E. Miller
AMBS president

Inside

Graduates prepared for serving the church

Survey reveals interest in new degree program

AMBS Panorama

Begin the new year at AMBS

Graduates prepared for serving the church

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary granted degrees for the first time this year, because incorporation of AMBS as one seminary removed the need for separate degrees from Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Goshen Biblical Seminary. Twenty-two people received degrees: 14 the Master of Divinity; six the Master of Arts in Theological Studies; and two the Master of Arts in Peace Studies. Two people received the Certificate in Theological Studies.

James Brown M.Div. Will continue as pastor of Harrow Mennonite Church, Harrow, Ont. "As a continuing pastor, AMBS helped me to tailor my course work to the issues, agenda and growing edges of my current ministry." Jim is married to Sharon Brown and they have two sons, Jacob and Peter. He is the son of Jacob Brown, Leamington, Ont. Jim previously received bachelor's degrees from Canadian Mennonite Bible College and the University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ont.

Jane Stoltzfus Buller MATS in Biblical Studies. Will continue part-time on the pastoral team of Walnut Hill Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. "As a Mennonite woman, the Bible's centrality in the church's tradition was problematic. At AMBS I have been given a gift of tools—tools which sharpen my conversation with the scripture and allow me to hear more of the voice of Truth within this story of God and humanity." Jane is married to Jim Buller and they have three children, Jordan, Jessica and Jonna. Her parents are Daniel and Rosalie Stoltzfus, South Bend, Ind. Previously she received a bachelor of arts degree from Eastern Mennonite College.

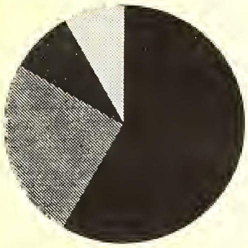
Brent Foster Certificate in Theological Studies. *Not pictured.* Will become co-pastor of Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., and continue studies at the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE), Chicago. "My experience at AMBS has enlarged my appreciation of the efforts and service which the staff and professors give to those preparing for church ministry." Brent is married to Sandra Foster and they have two sons, Michael and Christopher. He is the son of John Foster and Cecile Amerson, Peoria, Ill. He is a member of Church Without Walls, Elkhart, Ind.

Anietié I. Ikene M.Div. Plans in process. "AMBS has refined, honed and equipped me with skills and confidence I need to carry the ministry of reconciliation and peace." Anietié is married to Adesola Ikene and they have two children, Enobong Eunice and Iboro "Ib" Anna. He is the son of Mrs. Sedi E. Ikene, Edo-Eket Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. He is a member of New Wings of Faith Church, South Bend, Ind., and previously graduated from Bethel College, Mishawaka, Ind.

Douglas Day Hostetler Kaufman M.Div. Plans in process. "While at times difficult, being immersed in the Scriptures was also a joy. I leave seminary with a new confidence that God still speaks through the Bible." Doug is married to Jill Hostetler Kaufman and they have one son, Noah Mark. His parents are Calvin and Loretta Kaufman, Fisher, Ill. Doug previously received a bachelor of arts degree from Goshen College, Goshen, Ind. He is a member of Calvary Mennonite Church, Inglewood, Calif., and attends Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.

Steve Echols

Left to right: James Brown, Jane Stoltzfus Buller, Anietié Ikene, Douglas Hostetler Kaufman



Programs completed by 1994 graduates

- ■ Master of Divinity - 14
- ▨ Master of Arts in Theological Studies - 6
- ▩ Master of Arts in Peace Studies - 2
- □ Certificate in Theological Studies - 2

Katsuya Kawano MATS in Biblical Studies. Will pursue a Master of Theology degree at Duke Divinity School. "I have appreciated the sense of community, power of hospitality, harmony of academic rigor and pious faith, and quality of excellence." Katsuya is married to Fumiko Kawano and is a son of Rev. Masayuki and Yoshimi Kawano of Japan. He previously graduated from the International Christian University in Tokyo and received a Master of Divinity degree from Tokyo Biblical Seminary and Kobe Lutheran Theological Seminary.

Henry Kliewer M.Div. Will continue as pastor of Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, B.C. "I appreciate AMBS for its wholistic preparation and support over the past 20 years in my ministry as missionary and pastor." Henry is married to Nellie Kliewer and they have two children, Kara and Stefan. He is the son of Victor and Elisabeth Kliewer, Winnipeg, Man.; and holds bachelor's degrees from the University of Manitoba and Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

Ella Mae Lehman Certificate in Theological Studies. *Not pictured.* Will continue seminary studies toward a master's degree and continue working in the church. "As a summer session and January interterm student, I have been stimulated and nurtured to a deeper faith walk. My weeks on campus are mini sabbaticals." Ella Mae is married to J.E. Lehman and they have four children. She is a member of Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio, and received a bachelor of arts degree from Malone College, Canton, Ohio.

Maryann Njeri Mbire MATS in Christian Education. Will pursue further studies at the Presbyterian School of Christian Education, Richmond, Va. Most meaningful for Njeri in her seminary experiences were "friendships, various courses I took, forums, community activities, interaction with faculty and staff, and worship services at Belmont." Originally from Thika, Kenya, Njeri received a degree in business administration from the University of East Africa, Eldoret, Kenya. She attends Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Thomas H. Montgomery M.Div. Will continue his present full-time assignment as associate pastor at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Elkhart, Ind. "I especially appreciated the many outstanding teachers at AMBS who impacted my life and ministry in ways I'm sure they will never be aware of." Tom is married to Susan Montgomery and they have six children, Kim, Tom, Lori, Shawn, Tony and Brian. He is the son of Harold and Aileen Flintoff of Sand Lake, Mich., and previously received a bachelor's degree from Grand Rapids Baptist College, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Steve Echols

Left to right: Katsuya Kawano, Henry Kliewer, Maryann Njeri Mbire, Thomas Montgomery

Graduate Mark Stahl from Freeman, S.D., talks with family members following the commissioning service May 19 in the AMBS chapel. He and Karen, his wife, are surrounded by her mother, sister and father: (left to right) Adena Nachtigall, Marie Nachtigall, and Andrew Nachtigall, all of Newton, Kan.
Photo by Mary E. Klassen

Gerald Neufeld M.Div. Will study Japanese, then plans to spend a year in Tokyo working with a Mennonite church. "Involvement in a black gospel choir, music at AMBS, deep friendships from across the globe, practical courses in ministry, and personal growth made seminary great!" Gerald is the son of Hugo and Doreen Neufeld of Kitchener, Ont. He is a member of Poole Mennonite Church, Poole, Ont. He holds bachelor's degrees from the University of Waterloo and Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man.

Steven M. Nolt MATS in Church History. Will begin doctoral studies in American history at the University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind., in September. "I have found my time at AMBS to be both academically and personally challenging. Church history studies have widened my view of the church and of God's activity in our world today." Steve is married to Rachel S. Nolt, and is the son of Wilmer and Doris Nolt of Lancaster, Pa. He is a member of Mellinger Mennonite Church, Lancaster, and previously received a bachelor's degree from Goshen College, Goshen, Ind.

Ralph Peterschmitt MATS in Theological Studies. Plans are in process but he hopes to work with the French Mennonite Conference in administration of mission programs. Ralph appreciated "the opportunity to grapple with theological questions;" as well as discovering America and building friendships at AMBS. He is a member of Bethel Church, Neuf Brisach, France, and is the son of Frédéric and Ruth Peterschmitt of Fessenheim, France. He received a master's degree from Ecole Supérierre de Commerce.

Peter Rubbert MAPS. *Not pictured.* Plans in process. Peter is a member of First Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, Minn., and is the son of Esther Milliman of Minneapolis. He previously received a bachelor's degree from Augsburg College, Minneapolis.

Dennis G. Schmidt M.Div. Will continue as pastor of Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan., where he has served since 1987. "Above all, I have gained a deeper love, appreciation, and respect for the Bible in its original setting as well as its relevancy for today." Dennis is married to Dianne Schmidt and has three children, Ryan, Philip, and Julia. He is the son of Paul and Jeanette Schmidt, Newton, Kan. He received a bachelor of arts degree from Bethel College, N. Newton.

John Schrock M.Div. Will enter one-year residency in clinical pastoral education at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. "By helping me to better understand the Bible and how theology is done, seminary has further affirmed my belief in the truths of Anabaptist Christianity." Formerly of Wayland, Iowa, John is married to Melissa Schrock and is the son of JoAnn and the late John Schrock. He is a member of Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, and previously received a bachelor of arts degree from Central College, Pella, Iowa.

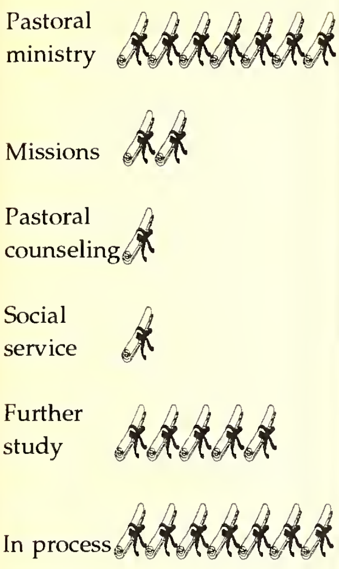
Mary Mae Schwartzentruber M.Div. Will continue as pastor of Nairn Mennonite Church, Ailsa Craig, Ont. "Study over an extended time period and in varied settings provided diverse encounters with the church, allowing me refreshment and maturation theologically and biblically."

Len Siemens MAPS. Plans in process. Siemens says what was most meaningful at AMBS was "interacting with people of diverse backgrounds and a wide range in experiences, and interacting with both traditional and contemporary Mennonite perspectives on church, peace and ministry." He is a member of the Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, Man., and is the son of Robert and Tina Siemens, Rosthern, Sask. He has studied at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and received a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Edmonton, Edmonton, Alb.

Steve Echols

Left to right: Gerald Neufeld, Steven Nolt, Ralph Peterschmitt, John Schrock

Plans of 1994 AMBS graduates



Mark W. Stahl M.Div. Will become pastor of Pulaski Mennonite Church, Pulaski, Iowa, in August. "Learning the stories about the triumphs and tragedies of those in that 'great cloud of witnesses' has provided me with guidance, inspiration, and hope." Mark is married to Karen K. Stahl, and is the son of William and Joann Stahl, Bridgewater, S.D. He is a member of Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D. Previously he received a bachelor of science degree from South Dakota State University, Brookings, S.D.

D. Bethan Theunissen M.Div. Plans in process; will pursue doctoral work in the future. Bethan found at AMBS "a gentle affirming community... spiritual direction and formation courses... opportunities for reflection on and counseling about previous ministry... wonderful, interesting people... all in all, an excellent place to recoup and think about the future." She is the daughter of Dennis and Mary Theunissen of Cape Town, South Africa. Previously she received a bachelor's degree from the University of South Africa. She attends Faith Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Steve Echols

Left to right: Mary Mae Schwartzentruber, Len Siemens, Mark Stahl, Bethan Theunissen

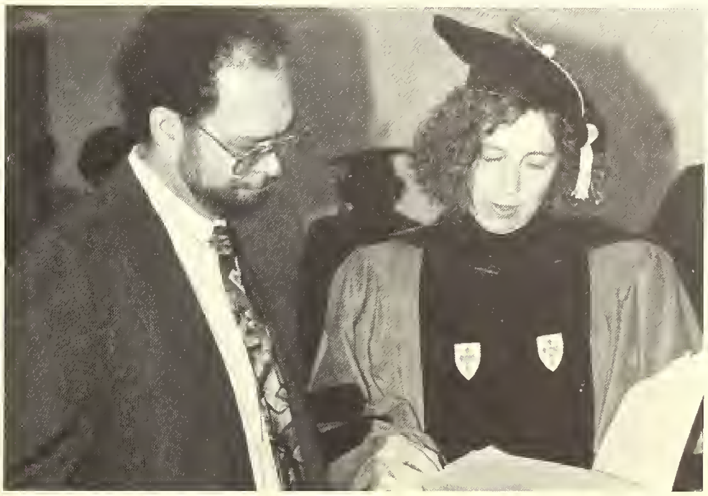
Commencement

Seminary graduates urged to go forward with hope

"Go forward with hope; he who has conquered sin and death goes before you in your pilgrimage," Stanley Green, newly installed president of Mennonite Board of Missions, told graduates.

Green's message, "A Subversive Vocation in an Age of Cynicism," called graduates to counter the growing hopelessness in the world by pointing people to Jesus.

"There will be many times in the ministry to which God has called you when you will be overwhelmed by the pain and suffering of people," Green said. "You must hold before yourself and the community the stories of forebears who have encountered the power of God to transform their circumstances and their lives."



Commencement speaker Stanley Green, conferring with AMBS dean Gayle Gerber Koontz, told graduates, "We are called simply to point to Jesus." Photo by Mary E. Klassen

Joan Troyer M.Div. Plans in process. "Having my faith in God challenged and strengthened through reading, lectures, and practical experience in the church has produced a life-long discipline in my life." Joan is the daughter of Lawrence and Evelyn Troyer of Goshen, Ind., and she is a member of Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen. She previously received a bachelor of science in nursing degree from Goshen College, Goshen, Ind.

Philip E. Waite M.Div. Plans in process. "The most meaningful part of my seminary experience has been getting to know people who will be some of the closest friends I will ever have." Philip is married to Elizabeth Bontrager and is the son of Charles and Marsha Waite, Seattle, Wash. He is a member of Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, Ind. Previously he received a bachelor of arts degree in history from George Fox College, Newberg, Ore.

Lois Shenk Zehr M.Div. Will do pastoral counseling in the Goshen and Elkhart, Ind., area. "One of my many enriching experiences at AMBS was learning to know and study with persons from a variety of different countries and cultural backgrounds." Lois is married to Michael Zehr and has four grown children. She attends Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Michael M. Zehr MATS in Christian Spirituality. Maintenance and rehabilitation specialist for LaCasa, an interfaith organization in Goshen, Ind., which provides housing and educational resources to low-income families. "The opportunity for personal development and spiritual formation and learning to know persons with many varied experiences and cultural backgrounds have been most meaningful to me at AMBS." Zehr is married to Lois Shenk Zehr and has four grown children. He attends Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind. He is the son of Abner and Mary Zehr of Adams Center, N.Y. He holds a bachelor of science degree from Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va.

"Go from this place
and time as preachers,
teachers and counselors
who choose to worship God
with your heart and soul
and mind and life.
Go remembering the God who
drew hope out of the
Egyptian water, a holy
child from a humble womb,
a new creation from a
barren tomb.
Go rejoicing in God our
Savior."

Excerpt from charge to the class of 1994 by Gayle Gerber Koontz, dean.

Left to right: Joan Troyer, Philip Waite, Lois Shenk Zehr, Michael Zehr

Steve Echols

"Today we commit ourselves to stengthening
the church as a place of
healing and love,
to building up a church whose
way of life reflects the
ministry of Jesus,
and to nurturing and
inspiring the hope and
faith of the church as it
lives in a world of hopelessness and fear.
We ask your commitment
with us, and we ask for
God's gift of joy and
praise.

Excerpt from the response to the charge by the AMBS class of 1994.

Survey reveals interest in new degree program

AMBS is exploring the possibility of starting a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) program. The feasibility study included a survey sent to more than 4,500 Mennonite pastors and AMBS alumni. More than 900 forms were returned for a respectable 20 percent return rate.

Most of the people who responded are pastors in congregations. The major findings were:

- Of the 900-plus respondents, 147 are D.Min. prospects (that is, they have a Master of Divinity degree and are interested in working toward a D.Min.)
- Of these 147 prospects, 127 would consider AMBS for a D.Min. degree. Of these 127 people, AMBS would be first choice for 46.
- Of the 147 prospects, 38 intend to start a D.Min. program in the next one to three years.

The majority of D.Min. prospects are clustered in Indiana, Pennsylvania and Ontario. Their objectives for working on a D.Min. are to gain new skills in ministry and to work at biblical or theological knowledge and reflection. There also is strong interest in focusing upon spiritual formation and discipleship, pastoral care and counseling, and pastoral leadership and administration.

"One of the aspects that excites me," says Richard A. Kauffman, administration vice president, "is that while the D. Min. is a professional degree, it is based on experience. D. Min. programs take ministry and congregational life seriously. In fact, students in these programs must be in a ministry setting and use their experience in ministry as a context for learning."

In addition to exploring this new venture, AMBS is already committed to expanding its non-credit continuing education program designed for building skills in church leadership and personal and spiritual enrichment. AMBS also is exploring the possibility of a program to enhance pastoral training for part-time pastors who also have another vocation.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Open Doors

Seminary Sampler
Open House
October 16-17, 1994
March 5-6, 1995

Come to AMBS.
Explore how seminary studies can open new doors for you–
in your personal life,
in your congregation,
in your profession.

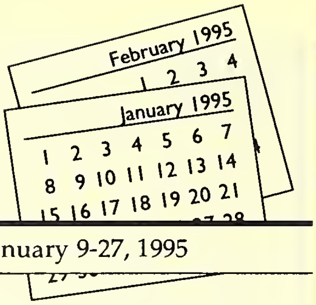
Training pastors to become teachers of seminary students is an important step as AMBS begins to require all students planning to become pastors to complete internships in congregations. "I have met very few pastors who see themselves as teachers," says Erick Sawatzky, AMBS professor who coordinates internships for students. So on June 3 and 4 AMBS hosted its first seminar for pastors who are now or are considering being supervisors for pastoral interns. Seminar leaders were Ralph Lebold, AMBS director of external programs (pictured on the left), and Sawatzky. Participants were (left to right) Randy Klaassen, Altona, Man.; Erma Fast Dueck, Winnipeg, Man.; Bill Kruger, Osler, Sask.; Doug Reichenbach, Elkhart, Ind.; and (not pictured) Richard Litwiller, Goshen, Ind.

J. Tyler Klassen

AMBS teaching faculty

Back row:
Erick Sawatzky, Jacob W. Elias, Marlin E. Miller, Wilbert R. Shenk, Walter W. Sawatsky, Richard A. Kauffman
Middle row:
Ben C. Ollenburger, Gayle Gerber Koontz, Mary K. Oyer, Daniel S. Schipani, June Alliman Yoder, Marcus G. Smucker, Theodore J. Koontz
Front row:
Willard M. Swartley, Mary H. Schertz, Ross T. Bender, Marlene Kropf, Perry B. Yoder

Begin the new year at AMBS



Interterm courses January 9-27, 1995

Epistle to the Romans
Jacob Elias
War and Peace in the Bible
Ben Ollenburger
Anabaptist History and Theology
John Rempel
The Helping Relationship in Pastoral Care
Erick Sawatzky
Christianity and the Arts
Mary Oyer
Christian Ministry in the Urban World
Charles Cooper
January 9-20. Two credit hours.
Course taught at Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE) in Chicago.
Revisioning Youth Ministry
Abe Bergen
January 9-20. One credit hour.

Weekend conference

In addition to the course, a conference on **The Future of Youth Ministry** will be offered January 13-15. Discussion of current trends and workshops on dimensions of youth ministry will be included.

For more information contact: *Steven L. Fath, Admissions*

Pastors' Week January 30-February 2, 1995

Strangers No More
A study, through the lens of Genesis, of how we are a people of mission and hospitality, welcoming others into faith and into the congregation.

For more information contact: *Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Continuing Education*

Leadership Clinics February 3, 1995

Enhancing Bible Study with Computer
Perry Yoder
Music for Special Occasions
Shirley King
(Planned for both pastors and congregational accompanists.)
Preaching
June Alliman Yoder

For more information contact: *Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Continuing Education*

AMBS Panorama

Staff and volunteers honored

Ed and Evelyn Peters were among thirteen honored on May 6 at an annual AMBS celebration for faculty and staff. They completed two years of voluntary service at the seminary, Ed on the maintenance staff and Evelyn in the library and Cooperative Childcare. As a student in the late 1950s, Ed also served on the maintenance crew. In the 31 intervening years, Ed was administrator of a nursing home in Rosthern, Sask.

Marlin E. Miller also was honored for his 20 years of service at AMBS, including 15 as president of Goshen Biblical Seminary. Since 1990, he has been the first joint president of AMBS.

People explore pastoral ministry

A "seed-planting event" drew seventy people to a banquet in Hesston, Kan., on March 21, as five pastors shared their experiences of being called and serving in the church. Participants were people exploring ministry as a vocation and their pastors. The speakers were 1993 AMBS graduate **Matt Friesen,** Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita; AMBS alumna **Janeen Bertsche Johnson,** Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita; **Grace and Paul Brunner,** interim co-directors of the Hesston College Pastoral Ministries program and **Howard Wagler,** South Hutchinson Mennonite Church. The evening "reconfirmed pastoral ministry as a challenging, rewarding vocation," said Dorothy Nickel Friesen, AMBS assistant dean.

Steelbergs share experiences

Elsie Steelberg, psychiatrist at Prairie View, Newton, Kan., told AMBS students and faculty, "Sometimes [in mental health treatment] the focus is on the client and families are neglected. It's important for the church to support the family as well." She encouraged pastors to work in tandem with mental health professionals.

Elsie and Don, her husband, who is pastor of Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, were Theological Center Guests at AMBS, March 1-4, 1994. They shared from their experiences in chapel services, forum, classes and one-on-one discussions.

AMBS balances budget

Preaudited figures indicate that AMBS has balanced its budget for the fiscal year ending June 30. This result was possible because of good response, especially in June, to appeals for contributions. Gifts from both individuals and congregations were strong in this fiscal year.

The balanced budget was also the result of careful efforts by staff and faculty to keep expenses down. Preliminary figures show expenses under budget by four percent.

The news is good for the AMBS comprehensive campaign as well. Strong leadership gifts have been received in the early phase, supporting both the ongoing work of the seminary and several special projects.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Consulting editor: Richard A. Kauffman

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Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

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Women take new look at Scripture

Bluffton, Ohio (Meetinghouse)—Strident male-bashing marks the stereotypical Christian feminist gathering. The stereotypical theology conference means heady quibbling among middle-aged scholars.

Women from across North America shattered these stereotypes at the "Mennonite Voices in Dialogue: Women Doing Theology" conference, held at Bluffton College June 24-26.

The 180-plus Mennonite, General Conference Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren participants included graduate students, artists, missionaries, social workers, women's shelter counselors and women married to pastors.

Discussions centered around six papers by Mennonite women scholars published in the April *Mennonite Quarterly Review*. The six papers focused on the atonement (Was Jesus' death on the cross an act of redemption or "divine child abuse"?), forgiveness (Does forgiveness offer good news to victims, or do our teachings on forgiving and suffering love add injury to injury?), and new visions for Anabaptist feminism.

Atonement: Mary H. Schertz, associate professor of New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Elkhart, Ind., examined the language of "divine necessity" in the Gospel of Luke.

In Luke "the necessity of Jesus' death and the redemptive power of that death are rooted in his commitment to the proclamation and enactment of the kingdom of God," she concluded.

"The robust activity of God's mission in the world is likely to get the people of the kingdom into trouble. ... But that is not victimization."

This distinction between victimization and suffering that is "voluntarily endured for the sake of being on the side of Jesus and against injustice ... strikes down the idea of enduring abuse as redemptive," said respondent Reta Halteman Finger, editor of *Daughters of Sarah* magazine.

Forgiveness: The true story of a Mennonite woman beaten by her husband preceded presentations on forgiveness. Presenter Dorothy Jean Weaver, associate professor of New Testament, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., called attention to the biblical role of the community in forgiveness.

"Forgiveness is not portrayed simply as some interaction between two individuals," she said. "The community of faith stands squarely in the middle," advocating for the person offended and calling to account the offender, who needs restoration to the community.

Yet women "sometimes find themselves in a psychological catch-22 when they are faced with the need to forgive someone who injured them," said AMBS dean Gayle Gerber Koontz in her paper. "If they forgive too quickly they may slip back into the sea of unworthiness and lack of self-respect. ... If they refuse to forgive they fail ... to be truly 'Christian.' "

Christian faith, however, "calls us to extravagant forgiveness," she said. It also calls the Christian community "to admonish those who injure others, to help clear the way toward forgiveness by hearing and empowering those who cannot now forgive those who injured them, and to remain open to becoming instruments of God's saving grace in the process."

New visions: Conference participants observed that with a few exceptions, the gathering was attended by white, middle-class women. Wilma Ann Bailey, assistant professor of Old Testament at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa., addressed issues of class and privilege in her study of the maidservant Hagar.

"Gender consciousness does not necessarily mean sensitivity to class," she said. She challenged Anabaptist feminists "to encourage the development of multiple models that reflect the living reality" of women of every race and class.

Arts: Worship sessions led by Karla Kauffman and Marlene Kropf included dance, creative movement, poetry, sculpture, music and dramatic readings in the voices of female Anabaptist martyrs.

An evening celebration featured a poetry reading by Julia Spicher

Inside the news

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Four Paraguayan Protestant churches are opening a national Protestant university. The General Conference of Mennonites will run the music faculty, the Convention of Mennonite Brethren will run the education faculty and the Evangelical Baptist Convention will sponsor the nursing faculty. The Anglican Church may join the project to run a languages program, and the Baptist Convention may sponsor a sociology and social work department. (*One World*)

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A letter listing essential elements of health-care legislation signed by 10 leaders of Mennonite denominations and agencies went to 58 senators and 230 representatives in the U.S. government. Signatories included Vern Preheim, general secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church; Lynette Meck of Mennonite Central Committee U.S., and James Lapp, general secretary of the Mennonite Church. Essential elements listed included health coverage for the whole population (including access to preventive, long-term and mental health care) and financing that includes employer and individual contributions. The letter also called for cost containment, saying, "As Christians, we do not view death as a medical failure but recognize it as part of God's plan. An unrestrained use of technology, in an attempt to stave off death, is both inappropriate and unaffordable." The letter to Congress was issued by the Mennonite Health Dialogue Steering Committee.

Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., has given $750 to Mennonite World Conference to help women from Africa, Asia and Latin America attend Assembly 13 in Calcutta, India, in 1997.

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Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

These two Ugandan brothers face an uncertain future. Mennonite Central Committee is sharing food valued at $50,000 U.S./$69,400 Cdn. with desperately hungry people in northeastern Uganda. A combination of conflict, drought, crop disease and neglect has created a local food shortage. "Famine is the main topic of conversation here," says MCC worker Sandy Munson, who works in the Teso region.

Kasdorf, a silk painting by Juanita Kauffman and a performance by organist Cynthia Neufeld Smith.

Mary Ochillo of Nairobi, Kenya, secretary of the Mennonite/Brethren in Christ Women's Fellowship of Africa, was a special guest. "It seems to me we are the same all over the world, dealing with the same issues," she told the gathering.

In the final worship service, Paula Diller Lehman, pastor at Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis, noted that the silencing of women continues, and cited the fury of controversy around a RE-Imagining conference held last November.

Lehman herself has experienced "an unofficial silencing," she said, since she made reference to homosexuality in her sermon at last summer's Mennonite Church Youth Convention in Philadelphia. The Bluffton conference was the first time Lehman has been invited to speak since then, outside her own congregation.

"Now is the time for Mennonite women to speak," she said. "We're not at the mercy of theology—we're responsible for it. We are doing work which will set us free." *Cathleen Hockman*

MCC foresees missing budget mark this year

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Contributions to Mennonite Central Committee at midyear were equal to contributions last year. This means the organization will likely fall short of its budget goal by about $500,000.

An 8 percent increase in income, or about $1.1 million, had been planned for 1994. Based on contributions received so far this year, it is unlikely the target will be met.

"We are grateful for the strong support people have shown us," says John A. Lapp, MCC executive secretary. "The budget increase was planned so that we could start a million-dollar bomb removal project in Laos and do a few other special projects without cutting current programs." MCC received $7.6 million in the first six months of this year, compared with $7.5 million last year.

"We hope to manage expenses to partially offset the shortfall," MCC financial controller Ken Langeman told the executive committee June 24.

A number of factors have contributed to the situation. U.S. contributions totaled $5.27 million by the end of May, compared with $5.64 million last year. However, contributions in the second half of the year are expected to be strong, as the proceeds from a number of Houses Against Hunger projects are forwarded to MCC.

Meanwhile, the decline in the value of the Canadian dollar over the past year will cost MCC about $300,000 U.S. Canadian MCC contributions are exchanged for American dollars before being sent on to Akron.

Concerns were raised about the effect this year's shortfall will have on programs next year. Latin America/Caribbean secretary Linda Shelly pointed out that it will be difficult for MCC overseas workers and partners to reduce the amount of money they have to work with.

"Have we gone to our constituency and asked them whether this is what they want [us to do]?" says Shelly.

Ed Martin, Central and South Asia secretary, agreed that a reduction will be painful. Cuts in programs in countries like Bangladesh could mean people lose jobs, he said.

MCC U.S. budget up: Meanwhile, after considerable discussion, the executive committee agreed to look at increasing the U.S. portion of the 1995 budget by 2.4 percent, despite this year's shortfall.

A number of people asked why the executive committee is considering a budget increase when this year's budget will unlikely be met. World needs continue to be conspicuous. Yet "our regional staff are recommending a flat budget increase," executive committee member Rich Garber noted in the discussion leading up to the decision. Garber is from Nampa, Idaho.

Abe Wiebe, committee member from Winkler, Man., suggested there may be items MCC could cut from its programs. "If we want to raise more money we should have good reasons for doing so. We add a lot to our program budgets but have difficulty dropping them," he said.

In a later discussion he urged the executive committee to ensure that those responsible for raising the funds have the resources to do so. "Otherwise we risk losing their commitment," he said.

Paul Quiring of Fresno, Calif.,

wondered if the organization has reached the point where the natural growth of resources and the natural growth of MCC programming have met. "Perhaps we've come to the point where we have to decide what those in the field [overseas] need and figure out how we're going to get it for them."

The final budget will be decided later this year.

In other executive committee news:

- The executive committee agreed to a proposal to establish a $600,000 Mennonite World Conference anniversary year fund. MCC is hoping to generate the funds through contributions over a three-year period. This is a one-time gift to be used by Mennonite churches in the developing world.
- A decision was made to begin publishing an MCC magazine early next year. The estimated annual cost of the magazine, which will be published six times a year, is $200,000. Most of the funding will come from a reduction in existing MCC communication and publication projects. The magazine will be geared to people in the 25 to 40 age group.
- Fewer people will be invited to North America through MCC's International Visitor Exchange Program in upcoming years. Uncertainty over U.S. visa requirements and the difficulty in finding training placements are among the reasons to reduce the number of participants. The program currently has 89 participants. Next year the number will be reduced to 60.

MCCers stay in Haiti despite flight ban

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Seven Mennonite Central Committee workers and two children decided to stay in Haiti while four MCC workers, five children and two student interns decided to return home before the June 24 ban on commercial air travel to and from Haiti.

"We don't know how long the current restrictions will remain in place. As MCC workers were deciding whether to remain in Haiti, I felt they should be prepared for a minimum of six months of extremely limited options for leaving Haiti," says Gordon Zook, MCC Haiti country representative. Gordon and Carol Zook and their three children caught one of the last flights out of Haiti.

"I don't believe those who stayed will be in danger. However, they will not receive mail and will not be able to leave the country easily if family or medical emergencies occur," says Zook.

Economic sanctions have been in effect since the 1991 coup that toppled democratically elected President Aristide. On May 21, the United Nations tightened these sanctions, adding new trade restrictions that caused an additional 5,000 people in Port-au-Prince to lose their jobs when assembly industries were forced to close. Each employed Haitian typically supports about 10 other people, usually family members. That means 50,000 people who had little money to begin with now have even less.

Not skipping the country: *Leah Reesor, age 8, skips rope with a Haitian friend. The Reesor family, of Stouffville, Ont., is among the MCC workers who chose to stay in their rural Haitian community despite a ban on international flights.*

Howard Zehr (MCC)

"Moving Toward Healing Sexual Abuse and the Church" a conference for survivors and others who care, will be held Nov. 11-12 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. Carolyn Holderread Heggen, author of *Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches*, will be the keynote speaker. Contact the planning committee at 702 South Sixth Street, Goshen, IN 46526, (219) 533-1044.

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Retired mission worker Helen Willms, Coaldale, Alta., received a medical service award April 23 from the Taiwanese government for her contribution to health care in that country. Willms served in Taiwan for 27 years with the Commission on Overseas Mission. She worked in a variety of positions, including as a nurse at the Mennonite Christian Hospital and at the New Dawn Development Center, both located in Hualien, Taiwan.

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Twenty-five-year-old Daniel Desmond did not expect to become a TV talk-show host when he began his Mennonite Central Committee U.S. assignment in Miami last January. Desmond anticipated working as a caseworker for people with AIDS with the Center for Haitian Studies. But shortly before he arrived, staff at the center worked out an agreement to produce a 12-part series on a cable channel operated by the Dade County school board. The staff asked Desmond to host it. The program, called "Haitian Contributions," began airing May 4 and was to continue until July 22. It highlighted positive contributions Haitians have made to the Miami community. As a music major and flutist, Desmond has a special interest in featuring Haitian music and arts. The shift to TV is the second career change Desmond has had to make since an earlier fall and hand injury impaired his ability to play flute. "If I hadn't hurt my hand, I'd probably be in New York City auditioning for orchestra positions now," he says. "To tell the truth, I'm glad I hurt my hand."

Thirty-five years after studying in Japan, Marlin E. Miller, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., returned to spend five weeks teaching and lecturing. His assignments during the June 17-July 18 trip included teaching at Tokyo Mission Research Institute, lecturing at pastors conferences and lecturing and preaching in churches. Miller previously studied in Japan for a year as a junior in college.

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Pearl Senseng (MCC)

Social workers from Cambodia Family Development Services visit with a Vietnamese woman they found living on the streets of Phnom Penh, Cambodia's capital, several months ago. The social workers rented her a room, got medical attention for her asthmatic baby and helped her establish a small business selling bean curd. Cambodia Family Development staff are currently using Mennonite Central Committee-supplied used clothing, layette bundles, soap and medical supplies in their work.

Scholars sort out how to relate to other faiths

Grantham, Pa. (Meetinghouse)—Where does Mennonite peace theology fit in when we relate to people of other faiths? It was a new topic for the triennial peace theology colloquium, and it proved hard to get into focus.

About 60 college teachers, Mennonite Central Committee staff and others tackled this issue during the June 17-19 event here at Messiah College.

Gayle Gerber Koontz of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., followed the thinking of John Howard Yoder in her exploration of "Evangelical Peace Theology and Religious Pluralism." A strong peace position can be the foundation for dialogue with other faiths, she said, for believers are called to embody a gospel of reconciliation.

Embodying peace means being "respectful and defenseless" in our relationships, she said. Nonresistance means allowing others to believe differently from us.

Jim Reimer of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., responding to Koontz, cautioned that it is not enough simply to allow others to believe differently. To be Christian is to believe that beneath the radical pluralism of our day lies a deeper unity.

Reimer also warned against allowing the peace aspect of Christ to become idolatrous. "Do we use our peace theology as a trump card in our discussion with others?" he asked. "Does it open us up to others or does it narrow us?"

J. Denny Weaver of Bluffton (Ohio) College presented a "historicized" version of the "Christus Victor" image (the triumphant Christ). His reading translated the cosmic battle between good and evil into a historical narrative—the story of Jesus nonviolently confronting societal structures that oppose the reign of God.

Common cause: In this confrontation, Christians may find common cause with other faith groups, even while maintaining a claim to ultimacy.

But we can't always be "over against" society, Duane Friesen of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., challenged Weaver. We need to culturally embody faith in our institutions, families and communities, he said.

Another historicized reading of Christian faith came from Gordon Kaufman of Harvard University, whose focus on the contemporary world arises out of a Mennonite concern with "life as it is actually lived

Hart wants to incorporate Native worship forms

Grantham, Pa. (Meetinghouse)—For Lawrence Hart, a Mennonite Christian and a Cheyenne peace chief, interfaith dialogue is not a theoretical issue.

Hart has been trying to make connections with Native "traditionalists" (non-Christian Natives) within groups such as the Hopi who have a peace tradition. Hart confessed to feeling alone in his endeavors—many Native Mennonites want nothing to do with their Native cultures, he said.

Native Mennonites are also at odds over the bill currently in the U.S. Congress to legalize Native religious practices such as the use of peyote.

Hart urged his audience to help Native Christians wrestle with their cultures. The agenda is urgent for keeping youth in the church, he said. He would like, for example, to see Native worship incorporate the traditional circle that opens to the East, to use traditional plants (some Episcopalian youth are urging their church to use cedar rather than incense) and other cultural forms.

Hart also suggested a conference on the topic of syncretism (the combination of different forms of belief and practice). Noting the close ties between traditional Mennonite faith and ethnicity, he noted wryly, "Native Americans don't have a corner on syncretism." Just as Christians everywhere express their faith through their cultures, so Native North Americans need to explore the connections between their faith and culture, said Hart. *Margaret Loewen Reimer* over the set of beliefs one may verbally affirm."

Kaufman called for "imaginative reconstructions" of faith for our time instead of the narrow "hermeneutical approach" used by Mennonites. "An idolatry of ancient texts is in fact unfaithful to God," he said. Faith in God requires that Christians enter dialogue "on basically equal terms with those of other persuasions, not making absolutistic claims."

In his response to Kaufman, Scott Holland of Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, emphasized the need for "world pictures" that go beyond "mimetic memory" or sectarian understandings. Sectarian readings contribute to sectarian conflict in the world, he said.

Dorothy Yoder Nyce of Goshen (Ind.) College presented a paper on women's struggles for peace amid the violence of religious communalism in India. The paper was written by Aruna Gnanadason of the World Council of Churches, who urged Christians in India (about 3 percent) to abandon their isolationism and enter national life.

In places of conflict such as India, interreligious dialogue "is not a luxury but a life and death issue," said Gnanadason.

What is the fundamental message Christians proclaim? "Jesus is Lord," said several presenters. (That formulation is a problem for feminists, noted some, and raises the problem of translating our language into another culture.)

This basic confession, however, is both exclusive and inclusive, noted John E. Toews of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., who presented a biblical perspective on people of other faiths. The lordship of Christ is exclusive in that Christ alone carries the authority of the one God, and inclusive when the church is engaged in mission.

The biblical texts on Jesus as "the only way to salvation" speak to Christians, not to those of other faiths, Toews cautioned. Therefore, when speaking about the significance of Christ for other faiths, something the Bible does not systematically address, Christians "should be cautious and gracious."

Do we use our peace theology as a trump card in discussion with others?

"The Lordship of Jesus is a great corrective to the arrogance of most theological formulations," said Toews. "Such a stance does not lead to theological relativism, but to humility about the truth claims we make."

Respondent William Klassen of Waterloo, Ont., suggested that it is more helpful to focus on "What is the good?" rather than "What is the truth?" Our mandate is to witness, not to convert, he said. Toews lamented the fact that the church still speaks about truth in categories that no longer exist in the post-modern world. *Margaret Loewen Reimer*

Western District and South Central hold joint sessions

Tulsa, Okla. (GCMC)—Bill Zuercher, who usually wears two hats, found the perfect time to wear just one.

As administrator of both the Western District (GC) and South Central (MC) conferences, Zuercher won't have to switch hats anymore. When the two conferences held joint sessions here July 1-3, he was given a double-billed baseball cap. One side was labeled "WDC," the other "SCC."

"This will be my most prized possession," he said with a smile.

Zuercher's cap symbolized a Men-

Double duty: *Bill Zuercher, administrator of the Western District and South Central conferences, receives a cap symbolizing his dual role from Dale Kauffman, new SCC moderator. Outgoing SCC moderator Ernst Harder looks on.*

Mennonite Central Committee is asking churches to plan a special prayer time for Rwanda during July 31 worship services. African churches are calling world Christians to join in prayer for an end to the violence in Rwanda, which has left a half million dead since April.

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This month four British Columbia churches began construction of an apartment building as an attempt to increase affordable housing in Clearbrook, B.C. Emmanuel Mennonite, Bakerview Mennonite Brethren, Wellspring Mennonite and the West Clearbrook Mennonite Brethren churches are building the 31-unit apartment building featuring space for day care, a library, crafts and other services. The proposal for the complex came from Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia Social Housing Society, a group that opened a similar project in Richmond, B.C., last September. Most of that residence's tenants are single mothers.

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Mennonite Central Committee, with other Canadian Foodgrains Bank sponsors, is providing 900 to 1,000 metric tons of beans valued at $900,000 U.S./$1.25 million Cdn. to Tanzanians who opened their homes and pantries to Rwandans fleeing violence. More than 250,000 Rwandans have sought refuge in Tanzania over the past three months. Tanzanians have a tradition of hospitality. When Rwandans began arriving in Tanzania, local people, many of them poor farmers, invited the refugees to stay with them and shared food and clothing with them. However, the hosting strained food reserves in many Tanzanian households. MCC has contributed $36,000 U.S./$50,000 Cdn. to this effort. MCC Canada is one of 12 members of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, an interchurch agency that collects grains and cash donations to assist hungry people. The beans, being shipped from Canada, are set to arrive in northwestern Tanzania by September.

The Kansas Board of Healing Arts voted June 3 to end its threat of disciplinary action against Dr. Yolanda Huet-Vaughn for her refusal to participate in Operation Desert Storm. Huet-Vaughn will continue to practice medicine in a clinic for low-income patients in Kansas City, Kan.

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True Love Waits is a national campaign in Canada encouraging teenagers to remain sexually abstinent until marriage. Launched by the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, the campaign includes a suggested worship service. The service includes four elements: celebration, in which youth give brief testimonies of their commitments; presentation, in which they come forward with accountable adults; dedication, in which the congregation pledges support for youth; and a message that focuses on sexual purity. The campaign runs through the end of July.

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Dr. Edwin Friedman shared five characteristics of anxious systems with attendees of the Ministry of Reconciliation conference June 9-11 at Eastern College, St. Davids, Pa. The characteristics are (1) reactive responses to suggested change and innovative leaders; (2) "herding," or adapting to reactive individuals so that they set the agenda for the system; (3) blaming others rather than taking responsibility; (4) a quick-fix mentality that focuses on relief rather than growth; and (5) lack of well-differentiated leaders. Friedman's response to anxiety is leader-focused. He says systems will function most successfully if the leader can be well-defined, expressing views and vision clearly and positively; stay connected to people; avoid getting hooked by reactive emotional processes; accept the inherent loneliness of leadership; recognize that in addition to vision, persistence, stamina and self-regulation are critical; and be able to recognize potential or existing sabotage.

nonite trend this year: joint regional conferences. For three consecutive weekends, MC and GC delegates mingled—first in Henderson, Neb. (Northern District and Iowa-Nebraska), then in Reedley, Calif. (Pacific District, Pacific Coast and Southwest), and finally in Tulsa.

The Tulsa meeting, attended by 700 adults, children and youth, was the third joint conference for the 13,000-member WDC and the 4,000-member SCC.

The focus was on fellowship and inspirational messages. Delegates had almost no business to do. With both business sessions squeezed into one morning, SCC delegates had no time to speak, and WDC delegates had time only to ask a couple of questions about integration.

The SCC business highlight was an announcement that the conference had achieved a rarity among Mennonites today: a budget surplus. The conference collected 105 percent of its budget in 1993-94.

WDC delegates also heard positive financial news. The conference is now debt-free, since the 2500 Place building, which houses the WDC and SCC offices and other shops in North Newton, Kan., is paid for.

WDC delegates also got an update on the conference's Centennial Fund Drive. With six months remaining in the three-year drive, $1,126,000 has been received toward the goal of $2 million. Three-quarters of the goal is for the regular budget and one-quarter for special projects.

New members: The WDC welcomed a new church, Joy Mennonite Church of Oklahoma City, into its membership. The SCC welcomed two new churches: Cornerstone Church, a cell-group church in Versailles, Mo., and Comunidad de Esperanza of Dallas, a new associate member.

The day before the joint sessions began, the SCC executive committee voted to take part in a regional MC/GC integration meeting in October. The meeting will include leaders of the WDC, SCC and Rocky Mountain Conference (MC), who will discuss "what integration might mean in our area," Zuercher said.

In giving a report from the Austin (Texas) Mennonite Church, a dually-affiliated congregation, Ron Diener said, "We sometimes feel like the children of two parents who never bothered to get married. ... We realize it's not going to be a shotgun wedding." *Paul Schrag*

Tips on family life

Tulsa, Okla.—J. Andrew Stoner shared advice on family with delegates at theWestern District/South Central conference.

Stoner, of Fort Wayne, Ind., is a marriage and family therapist and former General Conference director of family life ministry. He spoke on "Rethinking Family Life."

He cited Psalm 68:6—"God sets the lonely in families"—as describing God's purpose for families.

"Family is for the purpose of finding relationships, a place to belong, someone who wants me," he said. To make a church a place of belonging, Stoner urged his listeners not to exclude those who are "different."

"Too many people are feeling judged. There is a time to talk about sin and righteousness, and there are other times to just open our arms and love them and include them."

A healthy family has seven characteristics, Stoner said. Its members communicate and listen, support each other, respect each other, trust each other, have fun together, foster individual responsibility and model religious values.

Stoner challenged his listeners to be aware of their faults and to change. For example, he said a man should not think that just because he never hit his wife he never hurt her.

"I call us to integrity in the words we use, our tone of voice, the look in our eyes," he said. "These are the things that destroy relationships."

Stoner urged parents not to use their hands as "instruments of pain" on their children. He called for unconditional acceptance—which is not the same as approval—of children. This follows the example of God, who never withholds acceptance, even when we sin. *Paul Schrag*

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COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service

MINISTERS

Chris Atkins will end as pastor at First Church, Clinton, Okla., the end of July.

John Braun will begin Sept. 1 as pastor at Charleswood Church, Winnipeg.

Hermann Dueck has resigned as associate pastor at Springfield Heights Church, Winnipeg, effective July 31.

Regina Henry is serving as a ministry inquiry student at Hope Church, Wichita, Kan.

Pearl Hoover is serving as seminary summer intern pastor at First Church, Beatrice, Neb.

Ronald Krehbiel will begin Sept. 1 as interim pastor at Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Kristin Neufeld is serving as a ministry inquiry student at New Creation Fellowship, Newton, Kan.

Brenda Sawatzky Paetkau has begun as associate pastor at Eighth Street Church, Goshen, Ind.

Marcia Rempel will begin Aug. 15 as minister of youth and young adults at First Church, Newton, Kan.

Arlin Yoder will end as pastor at Trinity Church, Hillsboro, Kan., Sept. 30.

WORKERS

Eldon Antelope, White River Cheyenne Church, Busby, Mont., is working at the church through the MCC U.S. Summer Service Program.

Mary and **Scott Brubaker-Zehr**, COM workers in Colombia, returned to Canada June 19 for a North America Assignment.

J. Daryl Byler, Meridian, Miss., has been named director of the MCC U.S. Washington Office, beginning Aug. 8. Byler replaces **Delton Franz**, who was director of the office since it began in 1968.

Phonethip Chitchalerntham, Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., is a youth leader with the Lao Task Force in Mountain Lake through the MCC U.S. Summer Service Program.

David and **Patricia Falk**, COM workers in Brazil, returned to British Columbia in May for a two-month North America Assignment.

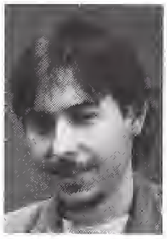
Guillermina Flores, Comunidad de Esperanza, Dallas, Texas, is working at the church through the MCC U.S. Summer Service Program.

J. Brent and **Judy Friesen**, Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., are beginning four-year MCC terms in Chad as country co-representatives. They previously served with MCC in Zaire and with the United Nations in Chad.

Elsie and **Rudy Frose**, COM workers in Brazil, completed their term and returned to British Columbia May 15.

Zandra M. Guete, Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, is working as a secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church, through the MCC U.S. Summer

M. Brubaker-Zehr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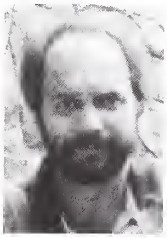
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P. Falk

B. Friesen

J. Friesen

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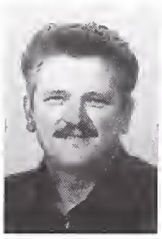
R. Froese

"Celebrating Ourselves" is the theme of the 1994 Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns biennial convention, set for Sept. 30-Oct. 3. It will convene at a retreat center near Indianapolis. Emma LaRocque, professor of Native studies at the University of Manitoba, will deliver the keynote address. Contact BMC at Box 6300, Minneapolis, MN 55406-0300.

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Three Shingon Buddhist priests accepted Japan Anabaptist Center's invitation to discuss "Peace: How We Understand It and What We're Doing About It." They met at the center in Kishiwa, Japan, May 23. "The unique three-hour dialogue experience was marked by mutual respect, warmth and humility," says Charles Shenk, Mennonite Board of Missions worker in Kishiwa. "We found that we have common concerns and that we are all less than we would like to be in the fulfilling of our religious callings. We were able to ask each other, with some new awarenesses, what the function or responsibility of religious leaders is in the face of war and other injustices."

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Four international students were among nine Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary students to visit Washington April 23-27. The students visited the State Department, the Pentagon, the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section Washington Office and the U.S. Institute of Peace office. For Jorgen Bjerrum, from Denmark, encountering lobbyists changed his picture of democracy. "There are 11,000 lobbyists who are doing nothing but affecting the politics of the politicians," he said. "It is completely undemocratic. It's paid democracy." But Nigerian Anietie Ikene responded differently. "I envied this country and the citizens who could speak at this level. In my country, you speak one word and you are hunted," he said.

Know about Civilian Public Service? The National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors is seeking information about CPS camp reunions scheduled to take place this year. The group helped organize the camps during World War II. Contact NISBCO at (202) 293-3220.

• • •

Gospel Herald **magazine won two awards at the annual convention of Associated Church Press, held May 30 in Kanuga, N.C. Editor J. Lorne Peachey's Jan. 12, 1993, editorial "Feeding the Hungry with Messy Theology" received an award of merit. Assistant editor Cathleen Hockman's news story "Compassionate Response Essential when AIDS Comes to the Congregation" (Nov. 2, 1993) received an honorable mention.**

• • •

Christianity is gaining about 70,000 new believers daily, mainly in developing countries, says Augustin Vencer, international director of World Evangelical Fellowship. But in the developing world, 53,000 people a week leave the churches, he says. He says the conversions to Christianity have shifted the Christian center of gravity to the Southern Hemisphere. "Two-thirds of the 1.8 billion Christians live in the South," he says.

• • •

Scriptures were translated into 44 new languages in 1993, bringing to 2,062 the number of languages in which at least one book of the Bible can now be read. The Bible, or at least some of the books of it, can now be read in 587 African languages, 513 Asian languages, 358 Central and South American languages, 341 Pacific languages, 189 European languages and 71 North American languages. About 6,000 languages are spoken around the world. The complete Bible is available in 337 of them.

Service Program.

Ed Janzen, Toronto United Mennonite Church, has been named executive director for MCC British Columbia. He replaces **Waldo Neufeld**, who will work with MCC on resource development.

George and **Martha Janzen**, COM workers in Japan, have completed their assignment and have returned to British Columbia.

Arletha Johnson is working as camp director for Joy Fellowship Church, Peoria, Ill., through the MCC U.S. Summer Service Program.

Jonathan and **Mary Kay Larson**, COM workers in Botswana, have completed their term and have returned to the United States. Jonathan will intinerate for COM in the fall.

Helen Verlyn Myron, Oraibi Church, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., is working as a youth coordinator with Bacavi (Ariz.) Church through the MCC U.S. Summer Service Program.

Fremont and **Sara Regier**, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., began five-year MCC terms in April in Mozambique as country co-representatives.

Brad Reimer, Foothills Church, Calgary, has been named MVS associate director/Canada. Reimer will be based in Winnipeg. He replaces **Miles Reimer**, who shares the position of MVS associate director/West with Kathy Landis.

E. Janzen

G. Janzen

M. Janzen

J. Larson

M.K. Larson

F. Regier

S. Regier

A. Rempel

E. Rempel

M. Sawatsky

Conrad Grebel College

The Board of Governors of Conrad Grebel College invites applications and/or nominations for the position of **President.**

The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the College and is responsible to the Board of Governors. Conrad Grebel College is a Mennonite residential and teaching college owned by the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada and affiliated with the University of Waterloo, offering programs of study at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Preference will be given to candidates who stand within the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition, who have earned a doctorate and who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada.

All inquiries will be kept in strict confidence. The appointment will be effective July 1, 1995. Applications and resumes should be received by September 30, 1994 and should be addressed to:

The Chair
Presidential Search Committee
Conrad Grebel College
Waterloo, Ontario
N2L 3G6

Angela and **Erwin Rempel**, First Church, Newton, Kan., are beginning five-year MCC terms in Gaborone, Botswana, working as country co-representatives.

S. Sawatsky

S. Sprunger

T. Sprunger

Eugenia Romero, Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., began a three-year MCC term in May in Akron, Pa., as assistant coordinator of MCC U.S. Community Ministries.

Jackie Sanchez, Comunidad de Fe, Chicago, is working at the church through the MCC U.S. Summer Service Program.

Marietta and **Sheldon Sawatzky**, COM workers in Taiwan, returned to the United States in June for a one-year North America Assignment.

Suanne and **Tim Sprunger**, COM workers in Hong Kong, returned to the United States in June for a summer North America Assignment.

Irene and **Robert (Jack) Suderman**, COM workers in Colombia, returned to Canada in June for a two-year North America Assignment.

I. Suderman

R. Suderman

Mountain View Mennonite Church, an established rural congregation nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains near Glacier National Park, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Position open in November.

Send résumé to **Pastoral Search Committee, c/o Frieda Kauffman, 195 Two Mile Drive, Kalispell, MT 59901.**

First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, is seeking a full-time **associate pastor** to work with its diverse multilingual congregation. Applicants should have previous pastoral experience, strong preaching skills, the ability to promote leadership to home Bible study groups, and also be comfortable working with young adults and families.

FUMC has an existing German-speaking congregation (275 attenders) and a small Spanish group (50). The associate pastor will work with the emerging English-speaking group (125) to help it firmly establish itself and then reach out to the surrounding community. This is an excellent opportunity for someone who is interested in working with a growing congregation in an urban setting.

All applications will be confidential. Please forward résumés to: **Pastor Search Committee, First United Mennonite Church, 659 E. 52nd Ave., Vancouver, BC V5X 1G8.**

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Faculty position in microbiology: Full-time position beginning fall 1995. Ph.D. required. Teaching and research experience preferred. Primary teaching responsibilities for the areas of microbiology and human or vertebrate anatomy. Possible teaching responsibilities in immunology and introductory biology courses. Adviser to preprofessional health science students. Active research with students encouraged. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send résumé to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.**

Prairie View, Inc., a private, not-for-profit, comprehensive mental health provider based in Newton, Kan., is seeking a psychiatrist to serve as **vice president of medical and clinical services**. This top-level management position will be responsible for standards of care and program development for community mental health centers in Newton, Marion and McPherson; outpatient services in Wichita, and a 60-bed psychiatric hospital and partial hospital located on a 70-acre campus at the edge of Newton. Prairie View was established in 1954 by the Mennonite churches and is guided by a strong tradition of Christian caring.

Submit cover letter and résumé to **Melvin Goering, C.E.O., Prairie View, Inc., P.O. Box 467, Newton, KS 67114-0467.**

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **magazine editor** (Akron, Pa.). This salaried half-time position is available Sept. 1. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have five years print editor experience, ability to plan ahead, meet deadlines and make decisions while being open to counsel; must be able to connect with concerns of 25- to 40-year-old North Americans and be committed to popular communication of Christian responses to public issues. Three years of MCC or other service is preferred.

Interested people in the United States contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151**; in Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381.** Applications due **Aug. 1.**

Reviews

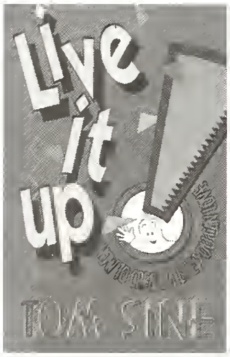
BOOKS

How to live

Live It Up! *by Tom Sine (Herald Press, 1994, 232 pages)*

Reviewed by Ken Ashman, Arroyo Grande, Calif.

How can you create a life you can love? A good way to start is to read Tom Sine's *Live It Up!* In this revised edition of his 1987 book, *Why Settle For More and Miss the Best?*, Sine leads us through a probing comparison between the values of North American culture and those God calls us to in the kingdom of Christ.



But this book is more than intellectual exercise, it's a how-to manual for members of the Kingdom.

Sine says "the only way to be fully alive is to devote our lives to serving the purposes of God." He explores the way our culture defines "the good life" and how this has shaped values within churches and individual Christians. Sine says this version of "living it up" has led to unfulfilled lives and ineffective Christianity.

He gives many examples of how Christians can be concerned about outside-the-church issues like "secular humanism" or "giving the poor a leg up," while "failing to recognize the malignant cancer of materialism, individualism and self-seeking within the church." Sine points out how often our values mirror those of the culture around us; we simply put them in Christian trappings.

Next, Sine presents his version of God's vision for humankind. He leads us through the sweep of history, pointing out the goals God has been working toward along the way. He tells numerous stories of Christians who have found wholeness in devoting their lives to God's vision for humanity. Sine's poignant examples present God's vision for the world in a decidedly Anabaptist perspective.

Finally, Sine deals with how Christians can live out this renewed vision of Kingdom membership. He gives useful advice on finding our individual calling or "vocation" from God. Throughout the book Sine challenges us to a radical faith lived out in concrete terms. Each chapter ends with questions for group discussion. An excellent guide for how the book can be used in a small group or class setting is included, making *Live It Up!* an attractive text for group study. This book has a vital message and should not be missed.

Country outreach

Rural Evangelism: Catching the Vision *by Kevin E. Ruffcorn (Augsburg Fortress Press, 1994, 128 pages)*

Reviewed by S. Roy Kaufman, Sterling, Ill.

With many Mennonite churches still more rural than most of our culture, this short book can be helpful in what are often depressed and lonely congregations. It is written from the perspective of rural Lutheran congregations, which often share Mennonite experiences and communities, so it will sound familiar to rural Mennonite readers.

Ruffcorn understands and identifies many of the unique characteristics of rural congregations and the difficulties they have with evangelistic outreach. Still, he is not prepared to give up on rural churches, nor to let them "off the hook" when it comes to evangelism. His definition of evangelism is designed to be helpful to rural congregations. "Evangelism is the proclamation of good news, both inwardly and outwardly, by word and action in an intentional and relational manner."

Each of the seven chapters is replete with fictional but true-to-life illustrations of the dilemmas rural congregations face and practical ways in which they have overcome obstacles to fulfill the evangelistic imperative. Ruffcorn stresses that growing rural churches will not replicate growing suburban and urban churches. To his credit, Ruffcorn understands that evangelism must begin not with a program but with the transformation of lives and congregations into communities of faith where God's presence is real.

What I missed most in this book was a vision for the unique mission and role of rural congregations. Ruffcorn succumbs to the fatalism that the decline of rural life is inevitable. However, rural congregations might proclaim the good news by becoming

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(Lucius Annaens Seneca, 4 B.C. – 65 A.D.) – a Roman philosopher

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communities of faith that reflect an alternative to the alienating and unsustainable aspects of urban life. Rural churches might announce God's good news as alternative communities, places where people live together and on the earth in ways faithful to God, good for the earth, and just and reconciling in human relations. There is a hunger for such alternatives in our consumer-driven culture. Too bad the church has so little vision for incarnating such alternative communities of faith as an evangelistic strategy.

Ruffcorn's book can help rural churches be more faithful to God as they undergo stress and change. It is disappointing to those of us looking for a new vision for rural communities of faith.

Survival mentality

Your Future, Your Choice: Christian Character in a Changing Economy *by Kerry J. Koller (Greenlawn Press, 1994, 104 pages)*

Reviewed by Lynn A. Miller, West Liberty, Ohio

In the midst of the recent avalanche of Christian "stewardship" material, I was encouraged to find at least one book that came at the subject from the perspective of "Christian character." The characteristics that the author promotes are "providence" and "resourcefulness," defined as having clear goals and using resources appropriately.

In the early chapters the author makes clear distinctions between the society's values and those of the Christian faith. His chapter on the scriptural perspective is particularly good, helping us take the longer view.

Unfortunately Koller ignores his own advice and retreats into "survival" thinking. His repeated referral to the possibility of a truckers' strike not only reveals the original publication year (1982) but also shifts his emphasis from the development of character to the survival of the self, and his motivation from faith to fear. The only things missing in the "self-sufficiency exercise" are the basement bomb-shelter construction diagrams from the hysteria of the '50s, and the list of weapons that will be necessary to defend one's own food supply from hungry neighbors. The advice to buy a portable home generator and to change to bicycle or bipedal transportation exposes his suburban assumptions, and his strong anti-credit bias even leads him into recommending the consideration of the usually more expensive option of leasing automobiles.

As Anabaptists who consider the definition of being Christian as being "active followers together of the living Christ," we need to ask how we as a community of his disciples are going to respond in terms of service and ministry to whatever economic difficulties befall us. The two "Christian characters" then are the unshakable worship of God in response to what God has already done, and then the life and ministry of the body of Christ in the midst of a changing world.

Resources

• **He Is Our Peace: Meditations on Christian Nonviolence**, edited by Emmy Barth (Plough Publishing House, 1994, $10 U.S. postpaid), includes the writings of Howard Goeringer, Eberhard Arnold, Christoph F. Blumhardt and others.

• **Directory of Civilian Public Service** (National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors, Suite 1400, 1612 K St. NW, Washington, DC 20006; $12 U.S. prepaid) includes listings of more than 60 percent of the 12,000 men who served as conscientious objectors 50 years ago.

• **Your Word Is Fire: The Hasidic Masters on Contemplative Prayer**, Arthur Green and Barry W. Holtz, eds. and translators (Jewish Lights Publishing, 1993, $14.95 U.S.), explores the meanings of Hasidic aphorisms, parables and prayers and what they offer to today's readers.

• **Where God Begins to Be: A Woman's Journey into Solitude** by Karen Karper (Eerdmans, 1994, $9.99 U.S.) describes the author's decision to live a life of poverty and contemplation as a hermit in Appalachia.

• **The Everyday, Anytime Guide to Christian Leadership** by Walt Kallestad (Augsburg Fortress, 1994, $8.99 U.S.) presents the character of Christian leadership, using real-life stories and practical exercises to illustrate 10 leadership principles.

• **Image: A Journal of the Arts and Religion** is a new quarterly publication showcasing art with religious themes and subjects. Contact Richard Wilkinson, (316) 942-4291, ext. 325. Annual subscription $30 U.S./year, sample available for $10.

• **Don't Touch My Heart: Healing the Pain of an Unattached Child** by Lynda Gianforte Mansfield and Christopher H. Waldmann (Navpress, 1994, $10 U.S.) uses the story of a young adopted child to explore the problem of "attachment disorder," a condition stemming from early abuse and neglect characterized by an inability to trust.

• **Economic Empowerment Through the Church** by Gregory J. Reed (Zondervan, 1994, $34.99 U.S.) is a guide encouraging more businesses to sprout from the church. Reed, a tax attorney, offers advice on setting up programs such as senior housing, child-care facilities, drug abuse centers, gospel recording production and TV and radio ministries.

• **Hungry Ghosts: One Woman's Mission to Save America's Empty Souls** by Mary Taylor Previte (Zondervan, 1994, $15.99 U.S.) tells the author's experiences as director of a juvenile correctional facility in New Jersey.

• **Spanish brochures available** from your local MCC office: "Una familia en la fe" (A family of faith) gives an overview of Anabaptist history and basic beliefs; and "Un compromiso con el camino de paz de Jesus" (A commitment to Christ's way of peace) contains the text of an inter-Mennonite peace statement commended to congregations for study.

• **Church World Service 1995 calendar and greeting cards** are available from CWS, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; calendar is $20 U.S. ppd. (order three and get a free set of greeting cards); set of 10 greeting cards $10 U.S. ppd.

• **I Can't Walk So I'll Learn to Dance** by Carolyn Martin with Gregg Lewis (Zondervan, 1994, $15.99 U.S.) is the life story of Martin, who was unable to communicate due to cerebral palsy. For 17 years she was classified as "retarded" and forced to live in institutions for mentally impaired people.

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Editorial

The secular seduction

Throughout the church people decry the secular influences of society. Yet we tend to be selective, objecting to those influences far away—like pornography—while ignoring those close at hand—like individualism. We need God's wisdom to discern between good and bad influences.

At the Conference of Mennonites in Canada sessions July 6-10, this subject arose in various ways. During a discussion one speaker expressed concerns about "the syncretistic tendencies of Native spirituality." Another made the point that Mennonite culture and faith are two different things, yet we often act like they are the same.

Lester Kehl, a pastor from Virgil, Ont., then stated that while people there may not want to admit it, their identity is primarily "middle-class Canadian." We are subject to a culture that is at times demonic, he said. We worry about other people's cultural habits yet ignore our own affluence. We are too busy, he confessed, to have people over for dinner on Sunday, and without a thought we use the services of others who cannot worship on Sunday because they are at work feeding Mennonites in restaurants. He called on people there to struggle with the destructive influence of our wealth and how it seduces us into anti-Christian behavior.

Some secular models are helpful, some are not. We need to discern carefully the difference.

People who work with other cultures struggle all the time with how the gospel and culture interact. They try to discern what is good or at least harmless in a culture and what is contrary to the gospel of Christ.

Many of us, meanwhile, are like fish in the ocean. We are unaware of the secular influences that surround us each day, the ways we live that are as familiar as the air we breathe. We need to listen to Jesus' admonition, "Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye but do not notice the log in your own eye?" (Luke 6:41).

Some want to eliminate all secular influences, but these people are fooling themselves. Even groups like the Amish, who are lifted up as examples—good or bad—of people who separate themselves from secularism, carefully discern what are good and bad uses of new technology, embracing some, like roller blades, and rejecting others, like automobiles. We are being influenced, and we need to recognize it.

Servants: If we believe—and I do—that all truth is God's truth, then we can embrace good insight, whether it comes from the church or the so-called secular realm. In this issue you can read about insights from the business world that closely resemble teachings in the New Testament. Businesses are learning the importance of community, of every member of the work force having a voice in the direction of the company. They are learning to employ a servanthood model of leadership. Unfortunately, while business has been moving toward these ways of behaving, the church has moved away from them, adopting earlier models from business. While business leaders talk about being servants, church leaders talk (or mostly act) like CEOs.

At times the church seems to be a few years (or a decade) behind the wider society in many areas. We have often taken our cues from society and ignored insights from our own faith tradition.

A resolution passed at the Conference of Mennonites in Canada sessions criticized the use of "secular social science models" in dealing with church leaders who cross sexual boundaries. Yet these models have helped push the church toward dealing in a just way with destructive patterns of behavior and with bringing healing to victims of that behavior.

Some secular models are helpful, some are not. We need to discern carefully the difference. To do so we need to study the Bible together, talk together and use the gifts of insight among us. We may need help seeing the influences we easily ignore. Christians—or even non-Christians—from outside our sphere may help us get past our blinders.

It takes courage to look at the logs in our own eyes. And it takes more courage to remove those logs. Lord, give us courage. *Gordon Houser*

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Inside

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Canadians take one more integration step / p. 13

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 15
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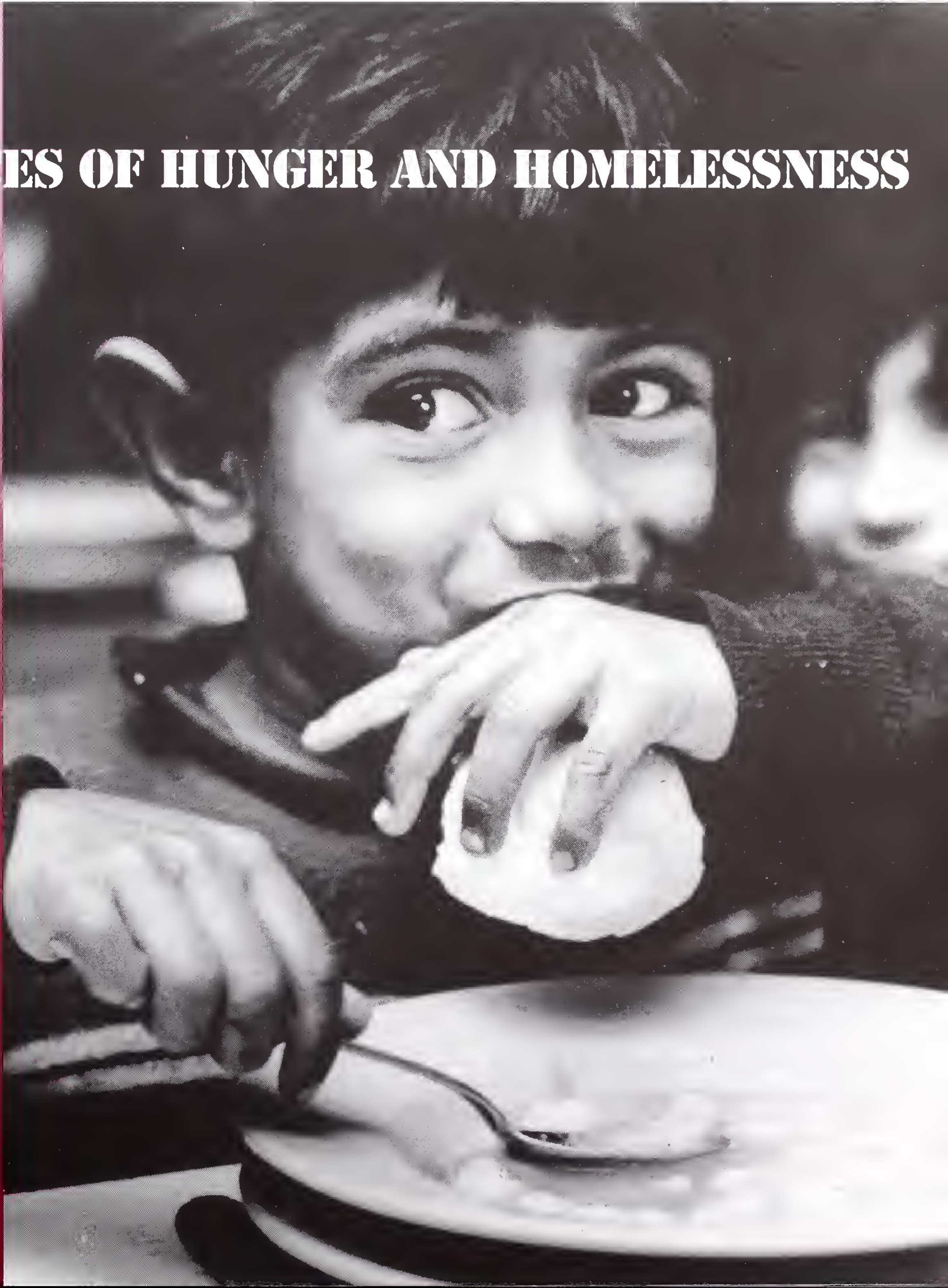
FACES OF HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS



- Get clean, get a job (see page 6)
- Why don't they get a job? (see page 7)
- The other side of the curtain (see page 8)

Prologue

The boy on the cover may look cute, but hunger and homelessness do not. If you've ever gone several days without food, you know that hunger can be painful. Then add to this the despair of not knowing if you will find food in the near future.

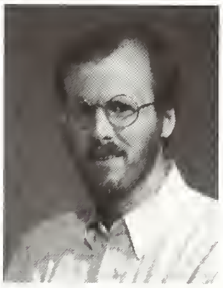
Emily Will takes us beyond the stereotypes of who is hungry in North America (see page 3). She does so by telling stories of specific people, each of them in a different circumstance.

We may also carry stereotypes about homeless people. It makes it easier to dismiss them, not take their problems seriously. Fortunately there are people like Thomas Reuter, Jeff Smith and Carolyn Prieb who give their time and talents toward helping homeless people get back on their feet and into a job.

Read about Samaritan House (page 6) and the fine work it does in helping people find employment. Lemuel Green (page 7) asks the question many of us may ask in our private moments, "Why don't they get a job?"

Carolyn Prieb, a gifted photographer whose work has graced our pages before (see the cover photo of our June 14 issue), writes confessionally about working in a women's shelter in Chicago (page 8).

Have your church or Sunday school class read the letter from the Mennonite church of Colombia (page 12) and discuss it. Let us know what you think. *gh*



Next issue: How to make conflict positive

Cover: Photo by Religious News Service

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

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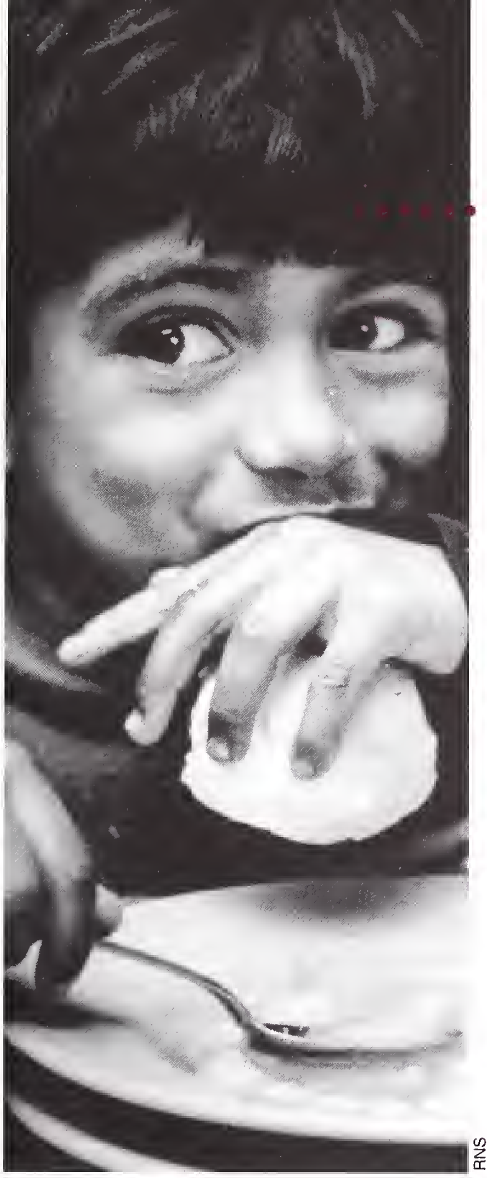
RNS

Millions of people across the United States and Canada do not have enough to eat. Here are some of their stories.

THE MANY FACES OF HUNGER

Emily Will

Most of "Patricia's"* friends and neighbors do not know she received food assistance from a U.S. government program for women and young children for five years. Patricia, who worked with Mennonite Central Committee in Africa, says she grew up with the idea that "Mennonites are there to help others, not to be helped." Patricia and her husband had to swallow their pride when two of their three children were born with disabilities.

> ***"Mennonites think lowly of people who receive government assistance, even though many Mennonite farmers receive subsidies or compensation for leaving their land fallow."***
>
> **"Patricia"**

"We have our own insurance, but it doesn't pay for much of anything—and we've had five surgeries, one laser treatment and one hospitalization for our children in the last seven years," Patricia says.

"At times our budget was just tight enough that I had to plan meals around the government-provided foods," says Patricia. "I remember hating that trapped feeling. I felt both grateful and angry at the same time.

"Mennonites think lowly of people who receive government assistance, even though many Mennonite farmers receive subsidies or compensation for leaving their land fallow. Somehow that is viewed differently," Patricia says.

In North America, hunger assumes a less graphic guise than it does in Somalia or Sudan. Instead of outright starvation, hunger in North America is better defined as "not always having enough to eat."

Rather than large-bellied children lined up for porridge in a refugee camp, hunger appears in the form of more than 4,000 people waiting up to five hours to receive a grocery bag of Thanksgiving Day foods in Lancaster, Pa.

Some 30 million people in the United States are hungry, according to the Tufts University Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy.

Winnipeg Harvest, Inc., a nonprofit organization in Canada that distributes surplus and donated food to food banks and social service agencies throughout Manitoba, has experienced more than a 300 percent increase in demand in the last 2 1/2 years.

**Names in quotation marks are pseudonyms.*

Instead of outright starvation, hunger in North America is better defined as "not always having enough to eat."

A girl with her two children in a Seattle homeless shelter

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The number of registered food banks in Canada has soared from one in 1981, located in Edmonton, to some 400 in 1994. "There may be double that number if unregistered food banks are included," says Jennifer McKenna of Winnipeg Harvest, Inc. And since the early 1970s, unemployment in Canada has also tripled—from 3 or 4 percent then to 11.3 percent now.

Perhaps because Canadian poverty rates increased so rapidly over a short period of time, many Canadians either do not know or deny that Canada has a hunger and poverty problem, Jennifer says.

"Last year, when the United Nations published a report critical of Canada for its high level of poverty among women and children, many Canadians found it difficult to believe," she adds.

The reasons for hunger in North America are diffuse and interrelated. Unemployment, underemployment, medical costs, homelessness, substance addiction, limited retirement income, family violence—these and other factors enter into the hunger equation.

Sandra Morin," her husband and their six children moved to Prince Albert, Sask., from the Cree reserve in northern Saskatchewan so that their oldest child could enter secondary school.

Because Prince Albert is the region's major urban center, Sandra's relatives from the north stay with the family often—for example, whenever they come to Prince Albert for medical appointments or to visit someone in one of the city's three prisons.

The relatives, as part of the extended family, eat their meals with Sandra's family; consequently the groceries the family purchases with government assistance do not last long.

Sandra does not like to see her children hungry but she views cousins, aunts, uncles, parents and grandparents as much a part of her family as her own children.

Sandra or her husband might find employment if they were more proficient in English. But even with English, jobs are scarce. The jobless rate among indigenous people in Prince Albert is extremely high, say Rob and Patty Burdette, who worked and lived among the Cree in Prince Albert and in Sandy Bay from 1987 to 1990.

Hunger among the Cree and other indigenous peoples, say the Burdettes, is related to their being a vanquished culture within a larger, dominant society. They often find themselves in unfamil-iar urban environments where living out their traditions—such as sharing food among all family members—may mean all share hunger.

Further, their white neighbors often judge them harshly according to their own customs. "People say, 'They get their check and take a taxi to Kentucky Fried Chicken. What wastefulness!'" Patty says.

What they don't know is that recent arrivals to the city have few cooking or eating utensils—they left the few they owned in the house where extended family members still live. And because they don't have cars and may not know the bus system, they rely upon taxis. It may also be less expensive for a family of seven, say, to take a taxi rather than a bus.

The unemployment rate does not help indigenous people rise out of their material poverty.

On the reserve they can hunt and garden, the Burdettes point out. Once they move to the city, however, they become dependent upon a wage economy. If jobs are unavailable or pay minimum wage, a family will have difficulty providing for its necessities.

Norman Todd of Atlanta knew constant hunger and became weak and ill while he was homeless for several months between jobs.

He rotated among three main feeding programs for homeless people in downtown Atlanta—one that served breakfast, another lunch and another supper.

"I did it just to stay alive, but I felt bad about myself and didn't have time for anything else," Norman says.

Even though he received meals, Norman says he "walked the food off going from soup line to soup line."

Norman found help at Samaritan House, a job-readiness program. (See story on page 6.) Supplied with food and clean clothes, he found work within days. "I had something in my stomach so I could think and I didn't have to go half across the universe to eat," Norman says.

At one time Norman was a substance abuser, a factor that often enters into hunger.

"Substance abusers are prone to hunger because when people are caught up in addictions, eating is the last thing on their minds," says Jeff Smith, an MCC worker who serves as a counselor at Atlanta's Samaritan House. "Any money goes to drugs or alcohol so a person can become malnourished very rapidly."

Jeff, of Palmer Lake, Colo., says addiction is "an issue no one wants to listen to now because it's not in vogue. No one wants to hear that across the nation we have millions of people addicted to drugs and alcohol.

"Atlanta has only one place where people can go for detoxification; it doesn't come close to addressing the need. The city needs at least six or seven additional services that can handle 200 or 300 people at a time," says Jeff, who is a member of Mountain Community Mennonite Church in Palmer Lake.

"Sally" became homeless after both she and her husband became involved in drugs. Although she was able to quit the habit when she became pregnant, her husband was not. He began to abuse her physically.

With an 18-month-old son, Sally moved back to her hometown near Philadelphia and found refuge in a homeless shelter for women and children that she now manages.

Sally experienced hunger before she received food stamps and is having trouble feeding herself and her two sons on a limited income. Credit card bills compound her problem; she owes some $2,500 on credit cards. However, friends at her Mennonite church are assisting her with budgeting and are supplying some food.

"Credit cards and the rising costs of everyday living can cripple me," says Sally.

Abused women, especially those at mid- or low-income levels, are likely to be hungry, as are their children. The reason has to do with resource control, says Susan Atkins, public education specialist for the Lancaster (Pa.) Women's Shelter.

"In a battering relationship the woman lacks power in economic decisions. Her husband may give her $40 to $50 per week for food and household needs, and he does not know how much things cost. In any case, he's going to eat most of the food," Susan says.

In severe abuse situations, the batterer also isolates the woman, prohibiting contact with friends and relatives.

"The woman cannot go out to find resources to feed her children, and the man can be arrogant about accepting help. It's as if the woman is supposed to spin straw into gold," says Susan.

A woman who breaks away from an abusive relationship may still experience hunger. Susan cites studies demonstrating that following a divorce or separation, a woman's income falls by some 73 percent, while the man's income rises by about 30 percent.

Government programs are "definitely part of the immediate answer to hunger in North America," says hunger educator Jocele Meyer. "They are part of a safety net until long-term solutions can be found."

On the other hand, individuals can control some factors.

"The economic boom that began after World War II has continued up to the present. Many people today are not accustomed to hard times and have not learned to spend money wisely," Jocele says. "Perhaps our expectations have gotten too high, and we've forgotten what real values are."

Hunger is also a spiritual problem, says Jocele. "What does hunger do to human dignity? What is the obligation of Christians who have more than their fair share? Why is it that the only parable that appears in all four Gospels is of Jesus feeding the multitudes? Why did Jesus ask his followers, 'Why don't you do anything for these hungry people?'"

Emily Will writes for Mennonite Central Committee Information Services.

RNS

"What does hunger do to human dignity? "What is the obligation of Christians who have more than their fair share? Why is it that the only parable that appears in all four Gospels is of Jesus feeding the multitudes?"

Jocele Meyer

GET CLEAN, GET A JOB

Emily Will

Cleanliness may be next to godliness, as the saying goes, but it is also a good first step to obtaining a job and a place to call home. Ask Robert Perryman, counted among Atlanta's 15,000 to 20,000 homeless people from 1990 to early 1992. Now, after participating in a job-readiness program called Samaritan House, he is employed as a truck stop mechanic.

"Once you get yourself cleaned up, you tend to do things that keep you clean," says Robert, 34. While homeless, "I lived to drink and I drank to live. You get to the point where you don't care. You forget about the way you look.

"No way a person like I was could find a job. First you got to look good, start feeling good about your appearance. People treat you different when you look clean and decent," Perryman says.

Thomas Reuter opened Atlanta's Samaritan House in July 1990 with an unusual premise: Many people are jobless because they are homeless, not necessarily the other way around.

Thomas, 32, has spent his adult life working with the homeless in Phoenix, Chicago, New York City and now Atlanta. While doing his master's degree in urban anthropology at Columbia University, he decided to take to the streets himself to try to understand what causes homelessness and how people cope with it.

"When I asked people why they weren't getting a job, they'd say, 'Well, look at me,' or, 'I can't afford a phone call,'" Thomas says.

The result is a ministry tailored to a segment of Atlanta's homeless; it provides job readiness services for those ready to make the changes and expend the energy necessary to find and keep a job.

Samaritan House is funded by city and county grants, churches, organizations and individuals. The facilities recently expanded and can now serve up to 500 people per year.

From the outset Samaritan House has incorporated homeless people's ideas and viewpoints into its program. A former client sits on the board. Thomas sees his job as "loosening up resources for the needs expressed by homeless people themselves."

"There are hundreds of programs for homeless people," says Anita Beatty, director of the Atlanta-based Task Force for the Homeless. "What makes the Samaritan House special is that it is almost completely driven by homeless people and their needs."

"When you give people the respect they deserve," Thomas says, "they kick in with responsible and helpful suggestions. The key is to set up a structure that encourages mature, humane relationships."

Each weekday morning, homeless clients arrive from shelters, halfway homes or "cat-holes" (street lingo for sleeping spots). At the Samaritan House they find showers, breakfast,

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Humane relationships: *Robert Perryman, left, chats with Jeff Smith at Samaritan House.*

> ***"When you give people the respect they deserve, they kick in with responsible and helpful suggestions."***
>
> **Thomas Reuter**

laundry facilities, attractive, professional-looking clothes and shoes, a board listing job openings, a bank of phones, practice interviews with personnel managers of local companies, an answering service, and counselors to guide them through the process.

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. worker Jeff Smith of Palmer Lake, Colo., has been an employment counselor at Samaritan House since February 1991. He meets with his clients once a week to help them set job-search goals and prepare résumés and to keep track of their progress in recovery from drug or alcohol abuse. Jeff's home church is Mountain Community Mennonite of Palmer Lake.

Ninety-five percent of the Samaritan House clientele is African-American males, most of whom have addiction problems. Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous hold weekly meetings at Samaritan House.

The role of substance abuse among homeless people is another "chicken and egg" debate among advocates.

Contrary to conventional belief, "Many people start using drugs after they become homeless," Thomas says. "They're hanging around with a group under a bridge and someone comes along and says they have something that will make them feel better. A number of people with no intention of becoming hooked end up doing so."

Thomas says many homeless service providers and advocates deny the substance abuse among homeless people, fearing homeless people will then be considered "undeserving" and that funding sources will be endangered.

"But by ignoring substance abuse they do homeless people a disservice," he says.

Because of substance abuse, many Samaritan House clients relapse after they leave the program. Thomas and Jeff are looking for quality transitional housing or halfway homes where the individuals can be supported during the tenuous months when they are reestablishing healthy living patterns while starting to work again.

Thomas is beginning to believe that at the root of joblessness, homelessness and substance abuse affecting African-American men is despair and a profound sense of self-worthlessness.

Many do make it, however. Many Samaritan House clients find minimum wage jobs; others are earning up to $10 or $12 per hour as heavy equipment operators, printing press operators and administrative assistants. One man landed a $40,000 professional position at Panasonic.

A successful Samaritan House graduate, now an accountant, is serving as president of a newly formed alumni club. "Research shows that one cause of substance abuse, maybe even of homelessness, is disaffiliation—a lack of connectedness with family, church and community organizations," Jeff says. The alumni club hopes to fill this void.

Robert Perryman has been at his new job for some three months but is still struggling with recovery from substance abuse.

Jeff is not discouraged, though. "Relapses often serve as stepping stones to greater recovery," he says.

Emily wrote this article in December 1992.

WHY DON'T THEY GET A JOB?

"I used to be on the bus going to work and I'd see a line of people in front of a church and I'd say to myself, 'Why don't they go get a job?'" says Lemuel Green, a graduate of the Samaritan House program.

"Now I realize how many of us are just two or three paychecks away from homelessness," he adds.

Lemuel Green

Lemuel, 36, moved to Atlanta from New York City more than four years ago to work with a crew constructing a chain of restaurants. When the crew was ready to move on to Florida, the deal between the construction company and the restaurant owner fell through. Lemuel was jobless.

He stayed at the Salvation Army, confronted his drug abuse and eventually found his way to the Samaritan House. Their program helped him land a position as a country club cook. He's been able to lease a room and stay clean of drugs.

"Many people have been out on the streets so long they don't want to do anything else. That's scary. I worried I could become like that," Lemuel says. "Having too much idle time is dangerous," he adds emphatically.

Emily Will

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CURTAIN

Lessons from working in a women's shelter

Carolyn Prieb

I had the privilege of working as a supervisor three nights per week at a Chicago women's shelter one summer. I arrived at 9 p.m., an hour before the doors were opened at the church where the shelter was located. Women were already lining up at the side door of the church in the dark, smelly, glass-littered alley.

The women looked tired, anxious to get safely inside the church basement. They knocked at the door before it was time to open. To be first in line when the door opened at 10 p.m. meant the chance to place a cot in a prime corner spot, or next to friends, or away from the bright "exit" light.

For these women, eating, sleeping, going to the bathroom, safety and avoiding sexual harassment had become survival issues.

For an hour before we turned the lights off the women signed in, set up cots and waited in line for decaffeinated coffee, rolls or perhaps soup donated by a church group.

Setting up the cots was awkward. Two metal bars had to be placed at each end, stretching the cloth, and often the bars slipped from hands, the metal clattering noisily on the cement floor. Two blankets came with each cot—one to cover the stained and smelly cots.

There was one shower for 20 to 30 women. Each night anyone wanting a shower signed up for a turn. If you were sixth on the list, that meant waiting until 1 or 2 a.m. I offered to wake them up when it was their turn so that they could get some sleep.

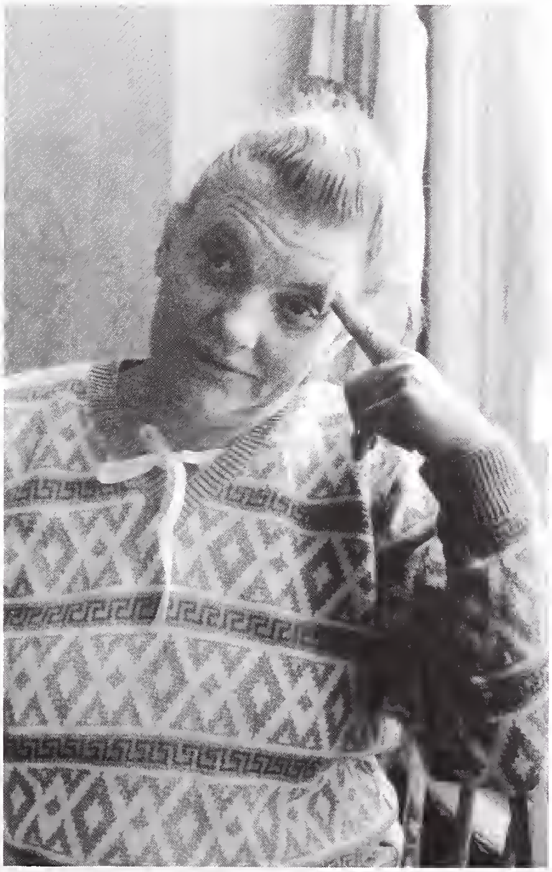
At 10:30 p.m. women sat or lay on cots and waited for the lights to be turned out. With little sleep over a period of days, weeks or months, many were irritable, some were hungry, some were physically or mentally ill, some weren't getting the medication or special diets they needed, some had been verbally and/or physically abused that day. For these women, eating, sleeping, going to the bathroom, safety and avoiding sexual harassment had become survival issues. Most shelters close at 6 a.m. and don't reopen until 10 p.m., which means long days.

Lights were turned off at 11 p.m.

Each woman's cot was about five feet from another cot on either side. The stiff cots creaked when the women moved around in their sleep. To me it seemed impossible to sleep, with the snoring, women visiting in loud whispers, and all these sounds increasing in volume as they bounced against the damp cement basement walls. Doors opened and doors closed with trips to the bathroom, loud knocks hit the door by women arriving late, and when the telephone rang the sound filled the entire basement. *How could anyone sleep?*

For many reasons, some complex, some simple, these women find themselves struggling to survive on the streets. The women I became acquainted with that summer had little in common, except they all were without a home. The commonality that comes to mind when I think of them is their strength and their suffering. The women endured their suffering and they survived.

I lay down on my stiff Army cot around 1:30 a.m. after finishing my chores, hoping for some sleep. My cot was set up on a stage in the church basement, behind a thick maroon stage curtain. On the other side of the curtain drawn between were the 30 or so cots against the four walls of the basement.



That drawn stage curtain separating me from the sleeping women bothered me. In the middle of the night, I lay on my back, unable to sleep. The stage curtain loomed large and heavy. I never opened it. Many times I thought about setting up my cot on "their" side of the curtain—but I never did. Sleeping on the other side of the curtain protected, separated me from the pain of being homeless. I had a home and I slept on the other side of the curtain.

Carolyn Prieb lives in Chicago. She also took the photos. The women pictured are from the shelter.

Letters

Health reform not needed

Do we really want a health-care plan that limits the freedom of America's citizens? This is exactly what we face if President Clinton's health-care plan passes.

The U.S. government does not pay for health care. Our system, which is the best in the world, is doing just fine.

Reform the Clintons are proposing is not needed. If this were needed, why is it that 81 percent of those surveyed by NBC are satisfied with their coverage? There is no health-care crisis in this country. Keep something else in mind: the desire for universal coverage (100 percent coverage) goes against the freedom of choice, because there are Americans who choose not to have health coverage.

Also, whether the subject is health care, food or whatever, there will never be a time when everyone is completely satisfied. This (utopia) is what socialism tries to accomplish, and utopia is impossible to attain.

Clinton's plan, which aims to take over 14 percent of the U.S. economy, also aims gradually to take over all aspects of our way of life.

More injustices exist in the Canadian system than in the American system. In our system (where the unemployed also have access to hospital emergency rooms), I have never heard of anyone having to wait for any surgical procedure.

Are the medical wonders available in this country also available in Canada? If so, I don't think that the quality in Canada is as high as it is here.

I read in a letter in the June 28 issue that the Clinton plan will mandate public funding of abortion on demand. Isn't this reason enough to oppose the plan?

If this plan truly cares for everyone, it would not erode our freedoms the way it does. A doctor who accepts payment for a service not covered by the plan may be subject to prison and a large fine.

Also, this plan treats everyone the same. On the contrary: We all have different needs. With our current system, we have the freedom to choose the care we need.

Whatever the future of health reform, Clinton's plan is *not* the way to go. *Jason Gross, Sturgis, S.D.*

Long-time reader

I have been reading *The Mennonite* a long time. My folks always had it when they were living. I am the oldest daughter. I don't understand everything, but like to read it. *Irene Koehn, Meno, Okla.*

Leaders and mission work

The Mennonite is important to me. I want to know what the leaders are doing and what is going on in the conference. I am interested in the work of missions and like to read about the work that is being done in the various countries where our own missionaries work faithfully giving the best of their years in the work of the Lord. *Adeline Kaufman, Marion, S.D.*

Money tips the scales of justice

We in the United States are fortunate to have one of the best judicial systems in the world. However, recently journalist Tony Mauro brilliantly exposed the fact that money buys a better brand of justice. The following is a Mauro summary:

"If O.J. Simpson had been arrested in Alabama and represented by a public defender, his court experience likely would have been quite different. A motion to suppress evidence probably would have been quickly brushed aside. He might have been arraigned with no lawyer at his side. If he would have had a preliminary hearing at all, it would have lasted about an hour, with a single police officer being questioned. O.J. might not have been assigned a lawyer until two or three months after his arraignment."

It is a perverse reality that money holds the most weight in the scales of justice. O.J. could spend up to $5 million in legal fees. South Dakota has 115 "lifers" in prison, and it would be interesting to know how their cases would have fared if each of them had $5 million to spend on his or her case.

When we all stand before God we shall all have the same public defender, and money will not buy a better brand of justice. Robert Frost said, "A jury consists of 12 people chosen to decide who has the best lawyer." *Dave Waldowski, Sioux Falls, S.D.*

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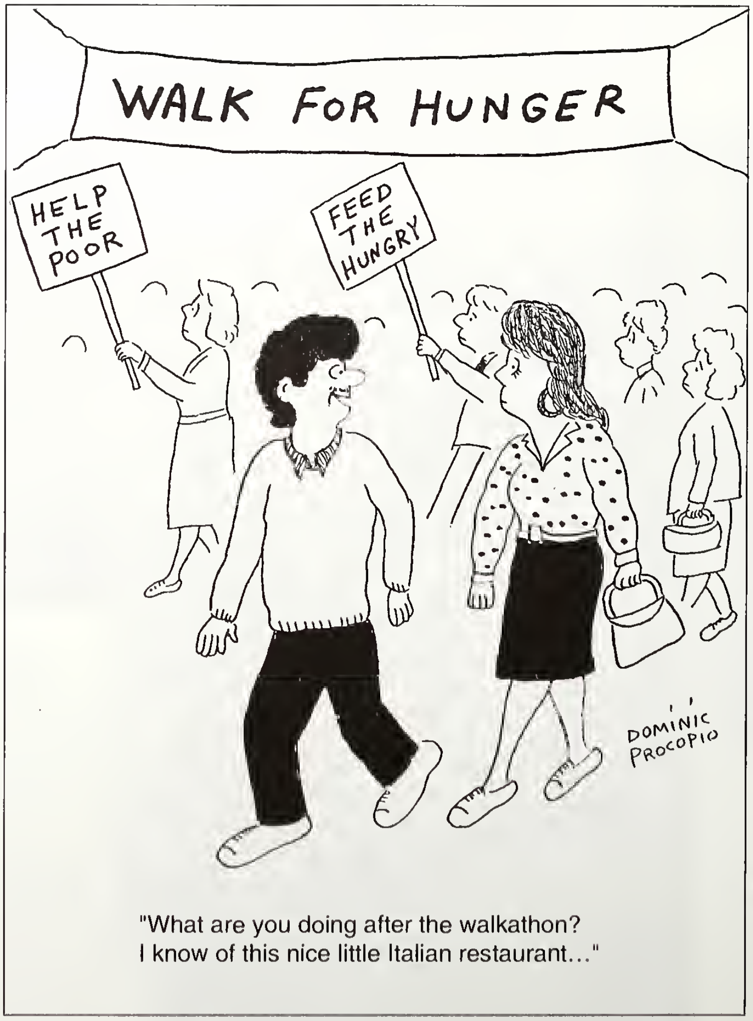
Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity. Write to* The Mennonite, *Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*



"What are you doing after the walkathon? I know of this nice little Italian restaurant..."

Brazil (April)—My mind is full of this morning's conversation with a close friend. I'd like to share some of the difficulties she faces in the hope that you also will be provoked to enter, somehow, into the life of a struggling neighbor or friend.

"I am a single, 38-year-old mother of two teenage girls. One of my daughters, at 15 years of age, is a single mother. She found out last month that she is pregnant again. My monthly salary of $65 buys our groceries. I have a monthly light bill that often doesn't get paid until the company threatens to cut our electricity. I used to pay a water bill, but because of the drought we now haul all our water; standing in slow, long lineups. I owe money in two stores, and each day that passes I am acutely aware that the interest has by now doubled. My own family (my mother and sisters) have said they would help, but no one has come through with any money. My ex-husband just bought a toy ice cream maker for his second wife's child, but do you think he gives even one cruzeiro to help us? And so I come here to your house to work every day as your maid, knowing that I'll eat breakfast and lunch while my own daughters and grandson are at home with only bread to eat. I don't know where my money goes. It was my neighbor from whom I borrowed a half kilo of beans yesterday. I told her that now there was only one person left who could help us: you, Patroa (boss), and so I'm asking you ..."

Our friend is joined by a host of others here in northeast Brazil, many who find their only hope is door-to-door begging. We find ourselves uncomfortably rich in comparison with our neighbors. We give and then are elevated, in their estimation, to the position of being their only source of hope. We are often irritated and impatient with this constant barrage of petitions. We'd rather be able to say that we always give in a spirit of love and sharing because, through Christ, we also have undeservedly been on the receiving end of so much.

We ask for your prayers as we seek to become more loving and selfless in sharing our material resources as well as our energy. *Enid and Mel Letkeman, with the Commission on Overseas Mission*

Jeremie, Haiti (July 15)—As fear intensifies, coupled with hunger, panic and desperation, the atmosphere in Haiti is ripe for an explosive situation. Even "middle-class" families that could once feed their children are beginning to worry that they might become like those they've always felt sorry for. Daily injustices violate young men's instinctive sense of their rights, and they struggle to repress their rage. Christian Peacemaker Teams' (CPT) neighbors in St. Helene have said that, lacking any semblance of a legitimate justice system, they would now use violence if threatened directly. "Bernard," who works at the St. Helene church, says the tension is like a fire slowly smoldering at both ends of a stick. Sooner or later the stick will burst into uncontrollable flames.

People here wonder about the motives of the United States. The majority of Haitians believe the United States was a major force behind the 1991 coup d'etat that removed President Aristide from the National Palace. Evidence in the past 33 months confirms their perception that the United States is toying with them as pawns in a larger political game. Virtually no one trusts that the current political process is honest, and they are weary of cynical manipulation. Comparisons have been made to the U.S. invasion of Panama in December 1989.

General Cedras' brother Alix has said, "The ignorant, starving peasants aren't ready for democracy; they only understand force." CPT members live among these "starving peasants" in Jeremie—far from the capital city, where most reporters get their news. Each day we witness how clearly they understand and analyze their situation as they speak of political and economic realities that drastically affect their everyday lives. We experience the daily sharing and mediating that goes on among poor Haitians. The majority reject force and abuse.

The flame is getting hotter, however. How long will the people pulling the strings force the majority of Haitians to sit on the burner—until they're completely incinerated? *Kathy Kelly and Lena Seigers, with Christian Peacemaker Teams*

Highway

Suzanne Lawrence

Melted sky quivers up the road
like a quiet, running creek.

When elusive pools no longer run
I shall stop this car,

lose my shoes, cool my toes, swim,
maybe fly, in shallows of blue sky.

Suzanne Lawrence lives near Hillsboro, Kan.

An open letter from the Mennonite Church of Colombia

We greet you from Colombia in the name of Christ. We hope that God's blessings are abundantly present for you in your important ministries.

As you are aware, the Mennonite Church of Colombia has had a long relationship and partnership with the General Conference and its churches and institutions. We have been blessed in this partnership and have received much through the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), Mennonite Central Committee, trained personnel from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, from individual congregations in the conference, many, many visits from interested people in our partner conference in the North, prayers, human and economic resources, expertise in various ways, and encouragement; and we want to express our appreciation for this help. We also feel that we have been blessed enough so that we have also shared from our resources: We have received many tours and interested groups; we have shared our experiences with many; we have offered seminars; we have faithfully tithed, throughout all these years, one-tenth of our income to the mission of COM; and a number of our excellent leaders are serving in church ministries in the North. We feel that our relationship has been mutually giving, mutually receiving, mutually respectful and mutually upbuilding.

We want to express our concern and assure you of our prayers in the processes we understand you are going through at this time. We see and hear from various sources, especially the Mennonite press, that donations are down, that programs are being cut, that personnel are being released, that priorities are changing and that interest in the work of the conference seems to be declining in the North. All of this concerns us, especially since interest here seems to be on the increase, and more and more programs and facilities are needed to accommodate the new interest and visions that are arising in our midst. Many new doors are opening here, and thankfully the Mennonite church has good leadership to respond to the new challenges, but your partnership in these matters continues to be important.

We are a peace church living in the most violent country in the world. We sense a God-given responsibility to share and work in this society so that the Anabaptist vision can become more of a reality. We are forming congregations of disciples through active evangelism and church planting efforts; we have a seminary; we operate a peace, justice and nonviolence center; we have social ministries in popular education and community organization; we have a senior citizens home; we offer alternative education in two schools to some 400 students; we publish, distribute and sell Christian and Anabaptist resources; we offer retreat facilities for those who need them; we have worked at implementing conscientious objection to military service in our constitution and society; we have programs of Christian education at all levels and are working at making them and our youth ministries stronger. Even though we have only about 750 baptized members, we are able to directly employ about 10 percent of that number in full-time ministries, thus attempting, in a small way, to be an active voice within our society. Your participation in these ministries has been important.

Stay involved: It concerns us that interest for involvement in ministries such as ours seems to be declining in the North and that General Conference priorities are becoming more local all the time; it concerns us that the peace and justice person in the General Conference office was dismissed due to a lack of funds and/or interest in these ministries; it concerns us that mission and peace initiatives no longer seem to be a high priority for churches there; it concerns us that COM is being cut even further back, both in budget and in personnel. All of these reports in the Mennonite press, which we can only read about but feel helpless to influence or shape, have a significant impact on our partnership with you and will directly affect our possibilities of ministry here.

We are an economically poor church, but we are rich in goodwill and desire to work for the Kingdom, both here in Colombia and there in the North. … We would like to express our support for your ministries with a small donation ($250), which we hope can be a symbolic gesture to you and your churches and can be a sign of our hope that our partnership can continue to grow and be strong. We have combined some of our resources to help in your ministries. We would like to designate this donation to the work of peace, justice and global awareness within your constituencies, hoping that this vision can be nurtured and that awareness of our global partnership can be heightened. We apologize for our donation being so modest, but we pray that God can make this small seed grow in the vineyards in the North and here in the South and that the Holy Spirit can multiply these loaves and fishes.

Thank you for accepting this token of gratitude and concern. …

In Christ,

Evangelical Mennonite Church of Colombia: Peter Stucky (executive secretary), Cesar Moya (president)

Mennonite Foundation for Social Development: Leonor Solano (director)

Christian Center for Peace, Justice and Nonviolent Action: Ricardo Esquivia (director)

Mennonite Biblical Seminary of Colombia: Alix Lozano (Director)

Latin American Anabaptist Resource Center: Elizabeth Soto (director)

Mennonite Bookstores: Henry Góngora (manager)

The Senior Citizen Center: Enit Santanilla (director)

The Mennonite Retreat Center: Luzdy Rodriguez and Tim Stucky (directors)

Mennonite Schools of La Mesa and Cachipay: Julia Jimenez and Guillermo Vargas (directors)

Commitee for Evangelism and Church Planting: Cesar Moya (director)

Christian Education Committee: Julie Moyer (coordinator)

National Youth Ministries Commission: Bryan Suderman (coordinator)

Collective for Conscientious Objection to Obligatory Military Service: Ricardo Pinzón (director)

CMC—Conference of Mennonites in Canada
GCMC—General Conference Mennonite Church
MC—Mennonite Church
MCEC—Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada
NWC—Northwest Conference

Canadians take one more integration step

Clearbrook, B.C.—Meeting here July 6-10 under the theme "Partnership in the Gospel," the Conference of Mennonites in Canada took further steps in partnership by accepting the Northwest Conference of the Mennonite Church as an associate conference.

This decision allows the Northwest Conference "to participate as observers in CMC General Board meetings, Council of Boards, moderators and secretaries meetings and the annual sessions of Conference of Mennonites in Canada." Mennonite Church congregations that belong to the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada are already associate members and will decide by next year whether or not they will become full members of CMC. NWC, however, is joining as a conference, not as congregations. This association is initially for a one-year period and is slated to be reviewed at the annual meeting next summer.

Earlier in the meetings the subject of a possible integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church came up for discussion. Some voiced skepticism. Ruth Isaac of Saskatoon wondered how MC members feel ownership without congregational representatives at their meetings. Ron Sawatzky, MCEC moderator, replied that "there is as much loyalty as you see here."

Afraid to commit? Harold Peters-Fransen of London, Ont., said that MCEC leadership is more committed to integration than people in the pews of MC congregations. "There needs to be an exchange of members to work at emotional needs," he said.

Henry Neudorf of Winnipeg did not like the idea of a conference of conferences. It means "bureaucrats electing bureaucrats," he said. "People want to have a voice."

In an action that took a surprise turn, delegates defeated a recommendation by the General Board to form a

Gordon Houser

Family song: *A choir from the Lao Christian Church of Clearbrook, B.C., sings as part of an evening worship focused on "The Changing Church Family."*

Inside the news

As more Rwandans enter Zaire, MCC considers relief work / p. 15

Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ consider more cooperation / p. 15

Colombian activist pursues work despite danger / p. 17

Angolan refugee finds safety among Brazilian Mennos / p. 18

Three Mennonite conferences met together in Winnipeg July 1-3 to celebrate continued cooperation that began nearly a decade ago. The Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference and Chortitzer Mennonite Conference gathered for separate business sessions and joint worship. Leaders of the three groups have been meeting together since 1985.

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Palmgrove, a Hutterian Brethren community in southeast Nigeria, has broken ties with North American Hutterian Brethren. Three years ago, leaders of the small congregation asked to join the Hutterian Brethren. Recently the same leaders took control of the assets, properties and bank accounts of the Hutterian Church in Nigeria and declared their wish to be independent. "We felt that we should not become involved in a power struggle that might seem to be seen as a question of 'black vs. white' leadership," wrote Martin and Burgel Johnson, workers in Nigeria, in an open letter June 25. They wrote that they left the community with all bills and debts paid off and with enough food for six weeks, plus other items and "a substantial sum of money." "Most of our African brothers and sisters at Palmgrove want to remain faithful, and we will make every effort to keep in touch with them," the Johnsons wrote.

The United States' Central Intelligence Agency is trying to buy back from Afghan guerrillas the stinger missiles it gave them when they were fighting the Soviet army. The CIA is offering to pay two to five times as much as the original $25-35,000 cost of each missile. (*Washington Memo*)

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Jews, Mennonites and Ukrainians will meet to discuss their common experiences in Canada. A committee is organizing a national conference to be held in Winnipeg Aug. 28-31, 1995. The theme is the concerns and interactions of the three communities in Canada. The committee made a call for papers, from which 30 professors will be invited to deliver their papers. A banquet and mass concert are planned to showcase the three communities. Sponsors include the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, the Jewish Historical Society of Western Canada and the Manitoba East European Heritage Society, Ukrainian section. Contact the Jewish-Mennonite-Ukrainian Conference Committee at 370 Hargrave St., Winnipeg, MB R3B 2K1, (204) 943-0406.

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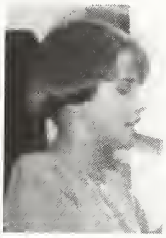
When racism came to Billings, Mont., the town responded. When racist fliers showed up in the town, and neo-Nazis began appearing at services in African American churches, community groups organized responses. A corps of volunteers repainted homes and garages spray-painted with swastikas. When homes were vandalized for displaying Hanukkah menorahs, local Christian groups distributed paper menorahs that began to appear in thousands of windows throughout the city. Church, civic and business leaders loudly condemned the hate crimes. As other incidents followed, each triggered a vociferous reaction from the community. Billings learned that a quick, unified and noisy response to hate violence can intimidate hate mongers. As a Billings billboard put it: "Not in our town! No hate. No violence." (*Salt*)

Canadians celebrate family and cross-cultural ministry

Clearbrook, B.C.—During the day, delegates and guests at the Conference of Mennonites in Canada discussed business and attended workshops. In the evening they joined in various celebrations.



Peters

In "A Celebration of Family" one evening, four stories offered different insights into the meaning of family. Alida Peters, 11, told of her family's activities. Wendy Janzen talked about living together with other single Christian adults. Helen Wiens related visiting cousins in Russia that she had not seen in almost 60 years. Magdalena Widjaja told of growing up in Indonesia with the strong desire to study the Bible and how God convinced her father to give her permission to go to school.

David Schroeder led in a confessional during which he said that all is not well in our families and that we need to acknowledge our failures as well as our successes.

Laura Eriksson gave a message that touched on the forces of change that have affected the way we view child raising and centered on the many joys that give us reason to celebrate our families. Even though Christian families are part of a broken story, she said, God still uses family to help us grow toward maturity.

Another evening's worship focused on "The Changing Church Family." It included historical sketches of Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church, which will celebrate its 100th anniversary next year, and First Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont., which is 175 years old. These congregations represented the Russian and Swiss Mennonite traditions, respectively.

Jake F. Pauls offered a biblical reflection on "The Biblical Promise for Christ's Church in Our Time." Four men read Scripture in English, Cree, Chinese, Spanish and German. Four members of Regina's Grace Mennonite and Peace Mennonite churches reported their growth from a cross-cultural ministry. And a group from the Lao Christian Church of Clearbrook sang two songs. *Gordon Houser and Roma Quapp*

Canadian Mennonite Council on Education. Then on the last day of business a resolution "that the General Board continue discussion about our educational needs and goals" passed without debate.

Of the 12 resolutions acted on, the one that received the most debate was one that opposed the use of acronyms at CMC business and worship sessions. Besides offering a correction of the meaning of "acronym," delegates agreed with the spirit of the resolution but voted it down because it was too "all or nothing."

A replacement resolution came later that resolved "that we strongly encourage Conference of Mennonites in Canada oral presenters and publications to use the full name of councils, commissions and committees instead of using abbreviations and acronyms." This one passed.

Many of the resolutions were general, such as "that we commit ourselves to being compassionate and responsible partners in the Spirit of Christ." Some people found others confusing, such as one that criticized "the secular social sciences model" and "the salaried pastor model." These all passed with almost no dissent.

In other action, delegates

- passed three recommendations to support pastoral work, church planting and evangelism among recently arrived "Aussiedler" in Germany, including placing workers there;
- allowed the General Board flexibility in interpreting the current bylaws as it incorporates new structures and writes new bylaws;
- agreed to an expenditure budget of $4,490,908, a 6.7 percent increase over last year's budget.

Next year's sessions will be held July 23-25 in Newton, Kan., just prior to the triennial sessions of the GCMC in Wichita, Kan. *Gordon Houser*

MCC considers relief for Rwandans fleeing to Zaire

Peter Williams (WCC/MCC)

Countryless: *These two refugee girls fled Rwanda to Tanzania, where they now find shelter at Benaco Rwandan refugee camp. Over 300,000 Rwandan refugees are at the camp, and thousands more arrive daily.*

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—On July 14, Cathy Hodder and Terry Sawatsky flew from Kinshasa, Zaire's capital, to Goma in eastern Zaire, where hundreds of thousands of Rwandans flooded the border.

The married couple, who serve as Mennonite Central Committee Zaire country representatives, are assessing how MCC can assist in what is being called "a humanitarian crisis." The fleeing Rwandans fear violence at the hands of rebel forces advancing into western Rwanda.

MCC has not had workers or program in eastern Zaire since the mid-1970s. "Because we do not have logistics in place, it would take us about three months to get MCC food to this area. We will look for other ways to help, likely through agencies that are already established here," says Eric Olfert, MCC Africa co-secretary.

It is unclear what impact the refugee influx will have on Zaire, a country that is politically and economically unstable. Two volcanoes near Goma have begun spitting fire and lava, further complicating the situation.

Mennonite Brethren, Brethren in Christ toy with cooperative work

Newton, Kan. (Meetinghouse)—They have had their first date, and while neither is talking about marriage, North American Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ are enjoying each other's company and getting to know each other better.

Edmund Janzen, moderator of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, called it "casual hand-holding."

The two Anabaptist groups have been holding quiet, low-profile and largely informal meetings for the past three years—with no set agenda.

"Our agenda is what we can learn from each other," said BIC general secretary Don Shafer.

Topics discussed have included theology, pastoral leadership, missions and education.

According to Mennonite World Conference statistics, the MBs have 45,000 North American members, 28,000 of them in Canada, while the BICs have 21,000 members, 17,000 in the United States.

No great driving force brought the two together, participants say. The talks evolved out of Council of Moderators and Secretaries sessions in which MBs and BICs found themselves meeting over coffee and breakfast. CMS is an annual meeting of

At least 1,000 people were killed and more than 23,800 left homeless in a June 6 earthquake in Colombia. An indigenous group, the Páez, living in the isolated mountain region of southeast Colombia, was most affected. Subsequent mudslides hit 84 settlements, swallowing up some 30 of them. Although relief aid has flowed to the Colombian government, many of the displaced people are still sleeping on the ground—in freezing temperatures—and numerous small communities have not yet been reached, according to MENCOLDES, the Colombian Mennonite development foundation and one of Mennonite Central Committee's partners in Colombia. MCC will provide $5,000 U.S./$6,944 Cdn. toward MENCOLDES' $85,000 U.S./ $118,056 Cdn. budget to assist affected communities.

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Mennonite Disaster Service had a chance to help out in Habitat for Humanity's hometown when flash floods hit Americus, Ga. Flash floods roared through Habitat headquarters' town and other parts of Sumter County on July 6, killing at least 10 people and damaging more than 125 homes. The mayor of Americus encouraged Habitat for Humanity to contact MDS for assistance. By July 10, 33 teens, young adults and a pastor from Lancaster County, Pa., were in Americus, helping out. Every year for at least the last decade, youth and young adults of Pequea Brethren in Christ Church have taken part in a summer missions project, often with MDS. This year the congregation not only helped raise the $5,500 needed for a week in Des Moines, Iowa, but also quickly lent equipment—shovels, hammers, crowbars, buckets, rubber gloves, cleaning supplies, two power sprayers—when they heard the group was going to Georgia instead. Southern Georgia has experienced more flooding since. MDS plans more work there, as well as in southern Alabama and the Florida panhandle.

U.S. Vice President Al Gore's National Performance Review of federal government practices has not spared the Pentagon. It reports the Pentagon spends $4.3 billion a year on travel—$2 billion for the travel itself and $2.3 billion to process the paperwork. (*The Christian Century*)

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Near unanimous support for expansion of the federal death penalty came from U.S. members of Congress who represent sizable Mennonite communities. Members of the House of Representatives had an opportunity to pass an amendment to replace the death penalty with life imprisonment, and another amendment to prohibit the death penalty in crimes where no murder took place. Both amendments failed. Of the 35 congressional districts with the largest Mennonite populations, only one representative, Mike Kopetski, D-Ore., voted for both amendments. All others supported the death penalty. (*Washington Memo*)

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Americans still have confidence in religion, but the military placed first in a confidence ratings poll March 25-27. The poll showed 29 percent of American adults say they have "a great deal" of confidence in organized religion, while 25 percent reported "quite a bit" of confidence. The military, ranked at the top as an institution, enjoyed the confidence of 64 percent of the U.S. public. Police tied with religion, with 54 percent of the public saying they had either "a great deal" or "quite a bit" of confidence in the police. All three institutions outranked the U.S. Supreme Court (48 percent), the presidency (38), the medical system (35), television news (35), banks (35) and public schools (34). Lagging far behind were newspapers (29), organized labor and big business (26 each), Congress (18) and the criminal justice system (15). Gallup Organization administered the telephone poll of 1,036 men and women over age 18. (*The Wichita Eagle*)

various Mennonite conference leaders.

The MB/BIC discussion developed about the same time the larger Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church started seriously pursuing merging into one body. But both the MBs and BICs say that didn't prompt their meetings.

"It was perhaps more a sense of mutuality," Janzen said. "Size wasn't an issue. We weren't feeling left out. ... It was just an idea that sprang up."

Similarly, any sort of MB/BIC union is not part of current talks. "They are not at the point [of] any sort of conciliatory unit or merger," Janzen said.

But that doesn't mean the idea isn't out there. Janzen said there are members of both conferences who would like to see them join. BIC moderator Harvey Sider said, "Who knows what will happen in the next generation?"

The conversations have been largely informal, held among leaders of both conferences, although recently each has been inviting the other to formal meetings as observers. At a lower level, BIC bishops and U.S. MB district conference ministers have also met.

Subjects discussed include seminary and college education. The BICs have one college, Messiah, in Grantham, Pa., and no seminary, while the MBs have two colleges, Tabor, in Hillsboro, Kan., and Fresno (Calif.) Pacific, plus Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno. Shafer said there is interest in placing a BIC professor at an MB school.

There is also interest in working together on home missions and church planting. The MBs have success in that area on the West Coast, particularly among Hispanics in urban areas. The BICs, meanwhile, are struggling to relate to a Cuban congregation in southeast Florida, Shafer said.

There are similarities between both groups. They are members of Mennonite World Conference and have representation on the Mennonite Central Committee board. They both have strong pietist and evangelical emphases and have had successful overseas mission work. More MBs and BICs are found outside Canada and the United States than in North America.

Both are also rewriting their confessions of faith.

But there are differences, as well, between the MBs and BICs. The MBs come out of the Russian Mennonite heritage and in North America are located predominantly in the Plains and West. The BICs, meanwhile, have

Teaching parents new tricks

Mary E. Klassen

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—"You learn from your children from the day they are born, but not usually in this formal way," John Lederach admits. He and Naomi, his wife, took the summer course "Conflict and Conciliation," taught by their son, John Paul Lederach, here at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. John and Naomi are leaving in August for a three-year assignment in Belfast, Northern Ireland, with Mennonite Central Committee.

a Swiss Mennonite background and are found primarily in the East.

Among other differences, the BICs have historically had dress requirements but do not now. The MBs have not had dress requirements. The BICs do not oppose the ordination of women, unlike the MBs. The BICs also have a holiness tradition, emphasizing the Holy Spirit's work in the life of believers and in congregations. *Rich Preheim*

After one year Colombian activist still unsafe

Santafe de Bogotá (GCMC)—Ricardo and Patricia Esquivia, Colombian Mennonite church workers here, continue to be concerned about their safety almost one year after Ricardo was falsely accused of murder in a leading Colombian newspaper.

On Aug. 12, 1993, an article in *El Tiempo* claimed that Ricardo was one of the assassins of a Spanish priest. Ten days later, at the urging of Colombian Mennonite leaders, he left for the United States, as he feared his life was in danger. In October 1993 he was joined by Patricia and their two youngest sons.

The Esquivias and their two children returned to Colombia Dec. 14, 1993, after a commission named by the Colombian government cleared Ricardo's name. They have no doubt that the international pressure from Mennonites, Amnesty International and others was instrumental in bringing about the change. Many believe Ricardo, a lawyer, was targeted because of his work in human rights.

Today church members think that since Ricardo's name was cleared,

Exile experience in North America educates Colombian activists

Santafe de Bogotá (GCMC)—Ricardo and Patricia Esquivia said they were enriched by their time in North America, even though it was difficult.

"For me, it was a situation of much desperation because of the things I had to leave," recalled Patricia. "It was very hard to be in North America, like being without a rudder. Here I have my sense of ideological fight."

Before Patricia arrived in the United States together with two of their children, Ricardo said he experienced for the first time what it was like to be in exile. "I had little company. People always were in a hurry, competing against the clock," he said. "I had the humiliation of trying to learn another language."

But his loneliness taught him an important lesson. "Over the years, I have worked with many people who were in exile," said Ricardo. "Now I do understand what it means to be in exile."

Both were impressed by the economic and human resources of North American Mennonites. "The North American church is a wealth, a talent that God has given to humanity," said Ricardo.

Patricia said her reaction was a bit more critical: "In North America, people have so many options. The Mennonite church in Colombia has accomplished a lot by our fingernails. We are not a rich church. We act from scarcity, from pain."

She also believes that "it is difficult to live out your theology when your needs are covered, when you have a full stomach. In Colombia, we have to live by faith and trust that the next day the Lord will provide."

Given this reality, both Ricardo and Patricia were surprised by how many North Americans were committed to the work of the church and to Latin American causes in spite of their relative wealth.

It also caused them to have a renewed sense of appreciation for the North Americans who decide to leave the security of North America and come to Colombia "to share the dangers, misery, hunger. I feel a lot of respect for those people," said Ricardo.

And, he added, "as Christians, we should not feel guilty or assign blame. Rather, we need to understand each other. The strength of one helps the weakness of the other; the weakness of one depends on the strength of the other." *Carla Reimer*

The German Institute for Economy Research expects that in the year 2000 at least one million people will work in the field of environmental protection, almost double the number working in the field in 1990. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)

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Mennonite Central Committee is shipping 437,500 water purification tablets, valued at $5,000 U.S./$6,944 Cdn., to southeast China. Floods there have affected 10.3 million people in five provinces. At the end of June many towns were still under water. In Guangxi province, one of China's poorest, 1 million people were living in tents and drinking and cooking with water contaminated by flooded sewage. The tablets, each of which purify one liter of water, are crucial to prevent disease. The Christian Council of Guangxi will distribute the tablets.

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Ron Claassen has a tip on reducing graffiti. Claassen, director of Victim Offender Reconciliation Program of the Central Valley, Clovis, Calif., writes in *VORP News*, "I talked to two young men (about 19) who have actively participated in doing graffiti in the past. ... They said that most graffiti is done for recognition and self-expression. They spend significant time working on just the right design for their tag. [A tag is a signature symbol.] ... I asked them what it would take for a graffiti artist to want to make a voluntary choice to stop doing it on other people's property. They described a number of punishments that could be meted out. When I asked them if they stopped because of punishment, they said no. ... They finally said they quit because they got a job. They each talked about the great feeling they had when they received their first paycheck. They talked about how the job provided a different type of recognition that they preferred." Lesson: Want to end graffiti? Create jobs.

Creation Spirituality reports that the U.S. Air Force plans to retrofit its intercontinental ballistic missiles with cooling systems that don't use chlorofluorocarbons in an effort to ease strain on the ozone layer. (*Salt*)

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A southern German village is moving toward environment-friendly self-sufficiency. Schoenau, a village of 2,500 inhabitants, is canceling its power provision from the regional power plant company. It will build its own energy generation network. Its plan includes power tariffs favoring electricity saving, decentralization of electricity generation, installation and renovation of water-based power plants to generate a third of the village's energy, and installations of block-heating power plants that simultaneously generate electricity and heat. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)

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Fifty organizations, including Greenpeace USA and Oxfam America, have formed a coalition opposing the World Bank and International Monitary Fund. The World Bank and IMF grew out of a conference 50 years ago to nurture global economy. "World Bank/IMF: 50 Years Is Enough" holds a five-point platform to promote (1) institutional reform to include openness and participation of affected populations in IMF/World Bank decision making, (2) changing economic reform programs to support equitable, sustainable and participatory development, (3) an end to environmentally destructive lending and support for self-reliant development that preserves biodiversity, (4) scaling back the World Bank and IMF and using saved money in development assistance, (5) reduction of multilateral debt. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

"there is not much danger," said Patricia. "But I still see a high risk. One is always expecting and waiting for something to happen because of Ricardo's work."

Ricardo, who is the director of the Colombian Mennonite peace and justice organization called Justa Paz, continues to be on the "hit list" of paramilitary groups on the Colombian coast, where he once lived. Although his life has been in danger before due to his work, Ricardo said that this situation has been extremely hard on him and his family.

> **'It is like a leech I cannot get off. It feeds on my blood. It is painful and has direct consequences ...'**
>
> *Ricardo Esquivia*

"It is like a leech I cannot get off. It feeds on my blood. It is painful and has direct consequences on my work, my family life and my ability to be creative and concentrate," he said.

"This situation breaks a lot of things in life," added Patricia.

But they are both quick to point out that others have not been as fortunate as they. Two other people who were also named as murderers in the *El Tiempo* article are afraid for their lives. "They do not have international support like we did. They are terribly vulnerable," said Patricia.

Carla Reimer

Undaunted: *Ricardo Esquivia continues his work for conscientious objectors.*

And despite the risks, Ricardo and Patricia continue to put in long hours working for the causes they believe in. Patricia is the director of communications at MENCOLDES, a community-based social justice organization of the Colombian Mennonite Church.

Recently Ricardo received publicity for his efforts to defend conscientious objectors. "The publicity could be good or bad for my situation. But it was clear that what I was doing was right," he said. "If I am accused of defending a conscientious objector, that is not a problem because that is what I believe in. But when someone accuses me of something I didn't do, that is serious." With the backing of the Colombian Mennonite Church, Ricardo is planning on bringing a lawsuit against *El Tiempo*.

"Fear in my life is a constant. I will die afraid. When I recently presented a defense for two youth who were conscientious objectors, I almost couldn't walk," he said. "You learn to control your fear so that it doesn't paralyze you. You may be trembling, but you go ahead." *Carla Reimer*

Angolan refugee finds help from Brazilian Mennos

Campinas, Brazil (GCMC)—Joaõ was a 26-year-old studying mechanical engineering at a university in Angola when he was ordered to serve in the armed forces. He recalls his initial reaction. "I was just a civilian like anyone else. I never thought I would have to serve in the military," he says.

The orders came close to Christmastime in 1992. Angola's 19-year-old civil war had intensified following the September 1992 elections.

As a result, the government decided to implement obligatory military service for single men between the ages of 20 and 30. Once the young men are ordered into the military, they are immediately sent to fight in the war, said Joaõ, noting that without any training, the men "die just like that."

But it was more than a fear of death that prompted Joaõ to flee his country in order to avoid military service. "I am a Christian. Even if you think

Carla Reimer

Free from war: *Angolan refugee Joaõ works at the Mennonite bookstore in Campinas, Brazil.*

about war for a little bit, it doesn't seem right to kill other people."

His decision was a risky one. Prior to leaving Angola, Joaõ had to remain inside his home for a period of two to three weeks. "If I went onto the street, the police would have taken me and I would have been sent directly to the war. My life was in danger."

It was also extremely difficult to find a way out of Angola. "Only by the grace of God" did Joaõ manage to leave in January 1993, flying from Luanda, the capital city, to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. A relative, who served in the military, drove him to the airport. Joaõ recalled how even though his relative wore his military uniform, he still was interrogated at the airport. Finally, Joaõ was allowed to board the plane after his relative said, "This is my son, let him go."

Approximately 30 to 50 people on that flight were leaving Angola for political reasons, Joaõ estimated. He became friends with two of them. One was a Mennonite who had a letter from his pastor that contained the address of the Mennonite church in Campinas, Brazil.

The three men decided to try to find the church together since none of them knew anyone in Brazil. At the Mennonite church in Campinas they met David Falk, a mission worker with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Falk said he thought the church would be able to help them.

He was right. The members agreed that the Angolans could live in their church building. And they helped the three men obtain the documents they needed to stay in Brazil, including official United Nations refugee status.

Joaõ continues to live at the church. The two other men have moved to another city to pursue work there. He also is a member of the church. "Every denomination talks about God, but I like the work that the Mennonite church is doing," he said.

While Joaõ attended a Pentecostal church in Angola, he said he does not miss the noisy services. He also appreciates the way the Mennonite members here study the Bible and act on their beliefs.

"At my church in Angola, the leader said, 'This is the way to do it.' Here, everybody discusses the Bible passages and arrives at some commitment," he said.

Joaõ's plans for the future are uncertain. Currently he works at the Mennonite bookstore in Campinas. However, he would like to return to school to complete his mechanical engineering degree. Unfortunately, he has found that the universities aren't too open to admitting refugees and, as a result, has encountered a lot of red tape. In general, entrance to universities is extremely limited in Brazil. The upper middle class and elite account for a large portion of the university students.

Another option is immigration to Canada or the United States—but that takes money and legal backing, both of which he does not have.

Ideally, Joaõ would like to return to Angola, where his family remains. He is certain that he is not receiving all the letters they mail to him because Angola's infrastructures have been severely damaged by the war. While he misses his family and is concerned about their well-being, he said, "all the confusion has to end first" before he would feel that it is safe enough for him to go home. *Carla Reimer*

Another conference has cast its vote for integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. The Allegheny Conference of the Mennonite Church voted for a recommendation that the two denominations integrate by the year 2003. (*Gospel Herald*)

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World Health Organization reports that 30 million people will die in the next decade from tuberculosis. TB kills more adults each year than any other infectious disease—more than AIDS, diarrhea, malaria and other tropical diseases combined. The drugs needed to cure a person with TB cost as little as $13 and rarely exceed $100 in developing countries.

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In 1990 high-income countries spent almost 90 percent of the money spent on health care worldwide, says Father James Hug, S.J., in *Center Focus*. We in the United States are now debating how to organize and dispense between 40 and 50 percent of the world community's available health care resources for the benefit of 4.75 percent of its members. (*Salt*)

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A Mennonite gave the invocation June 21 before the U.S. House of Representatives, beseeching God to help save the country's environmental inheritance. J. Lawrence Burkholder, president emeritus of Goshen (Ind.) College, flew to Washington at the invitation of Rep. Tim Roemer. In his invocation, Burkholder asked God "to help us save this inheritance lest we become rich while the land becomes poor, imagining ourselves fulfilled but future generations deprived, indulging in our well-being without being well." (*Gospel Herald*)

Record

Winnipeg will have a second Mennonite elementary school this fall. With the commitment of the parents of 50 students, Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary Schools, Inc. has leased a six-classroom school in the residential area of University Heights. The school is a spinoff of WMES, a school that began in 1981. That school has grown to an enrollment of 300 students from kindergarten to grade six. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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Church planters Lorin and Jeanette Bergen have started a new fellowship in the Surrey/Delta area in British Columbia. The plant is a part of the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia goal to start 12 new churches and double church attendance by the year 2000. Named Living Hope Christian Fellowship, the church began with a core of 22 adults and four children meeting for the first time May 8. Twelve came from the First United Mennonite Church in Vancouver. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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Roger Sider discussed a Christian response to U.S. health care in an address to the annual conference of Mennonite Medical Association, Mennonite Nurses Association and Mennonite Health Association. He said our problems include "our addiction to money and our loss of a moral consensus. Health care is a service, not a business, a covenant, not a contract." He called for strong community. "What strengthens the community will strengthen health care. The hyper-individualism of our society is simply not good for us." He called for care of the poor. "The underprivileged have a moral claim on the community, especially the medical community," he said. The meetings were held June 23-26 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa.

MINISTERS

Jim Baer is summer intern at St. John Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Dave Bergen will finish as associate pastor at Bethel Church, Winnipeg, in early 1995 to become pastor at Grace Church, Steinbach, Man., Feb. 1, 1995.

John Bergen has resigned as pastor at Pulaski (Iowa) Church effective in August.

Lowell Evans is a Ministry Inquiry Program summer intern at Pleasant Oaks Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Eric Musser has resigned as youth minister at Calvary Church, Washington, Ill.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen will become pastor at First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, effective June 1, 1995. She is now serving as assistant dean at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Kurt Steinke is a Ministry Inquiry Program summer intern at St. John Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Eileen Wiebe began July 1 as pastor at Superb (Sask.) Church.

April Yamasaki is pastor of Emmanuel Church, Clearbrook, B.C., where she had served as interim pastor.

Amzie Yoder is serving as interim pastor at Faith Church, Goshen, Ind.

WORKERS

Aiden Schlichting Enns, Fort Garry Fellowship, Winnipeg, began as coordinator of communications and alumni relations for Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, July 1.

Ruth Goertzen, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., has resigned as customer service representative for Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan.

Titus Guenther, Waterloo-Kitchener (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, joined the faculty of Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg July 1. He is assistant professor of theology and missions.

Dr. Chris Leuz, Commission on Overseas Mission worker in Taiwan, has been appointed medical vice superintendent for Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien, Taiwan.

Roma J. Quapp, Ottawa Church, began as editor-journalist for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada July 1.

Jennifer Stultz, Tabor Church, Newton, Kan., has resigned as editorial assistant for Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan.

Sophie Tiessen, Fort Garry Fellowship, Winnipeg, began a three-year Mennonite Central Committee term in May in Lesotho, where she works as a librarian.

Position wanted: Mature, approachable and creative individual, who is committed to the Anabaptist-Mennonite expression of Christian faith, with gifts in teaching, preaching, worship leadership and writing, seeks opportunity to connect with interested congregation, teaching institution or conference body to fill or create position (of at least 2/3 time) as **teaching minister, associate/assistant minister** (dedicated to above gifts), **Bible instructor, coordinator of distance education, or related.**

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Prairie View, Inc., a private, not-for-profit, comprehensive mental health provider based in Newton, Kan., is seeking a psychiatrist to serve as vice **president of medical and clinical services.** This top-level management position will be responsible for standards of care and program development for community mental health centers in Newton, Marion and McPherson; outpatient services in Wichita, and a 60-bed psychiatric hospital and partial hospital located on a 70-acre campus at the edge of Newton. Prairie View was established in 1954 by the Mennonite churches and is guided by a strong tradition of Christian caring.

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Reviews

BOOKS

Not for the timid

Biblical Authority or Biblical Tyranny? Scripture and the Christian Pilgrimage *by L. William Countryman (Cowley Publications, 1994, 144 pages)*

Reviewed by Perry Yoder, Elkhart, Ind.

The author, an Episcopal priest and professor of New Testament, has aimed this book squarely at a lay audience. He wants to raise the question with them of their relationship to the Bible, specifically, what type of authority the Bible represents in their lives.

But while the book is written as a dialogue with ordinary Christians, it may be troubling to many. The questions it addresses are uncomfortable, and the point of view represented may sound harsh.

As if to forestall such a reaction, Countryman writes, "A careful and honest examination of the difficulties both in the Bible and in our use of it is apt to offend some readers. Yet there is no other legitimate starting point. The God of truth is not served by avoiding the truth." With this credo in mind, the following chapter is devoted to problems involved in taking the Bible as an authority in science, history, belief and morality. The set of issues raised must be confronted by any careful student of the Bible, even if given quite different answers.

The discussion of the type of authority represented by the Bible is perhaps the weakest in the book. He phrases the question in terms of what we expect from an authority, which seems to beg the question of what type of authority the Bible represents. I personally find John Bright's book, *The Authority of the Old Testament*, much more satisfying in this regard.

In a following chapter, titled "Scripture and the Church," there is much food for thought and for discussion. I believe many will find the historical perspective presented here helpful.

Finally, Countryman is not concerned only with more abstract questions regarding scriptural authority but ends with two chapters on the practical authority of the Bible in the life of the believer. These two chapters are titled, "Scripture's World and Ours" and "Taking the Scriptures on Pilgrimage."

This book can be given a recommendation for those eager to confront the hard questions of our use of the Bible and willing to enter into energetic dialogue with the author. For the more timid, it may be too challenging.

Pastoral self-help

Things They Never Taught You in Seminary *by Deborah and James Bushfield (Herald Press, 1994, 160 pages)*

Reviewed by Matt Friesen, Wichita, Kan.

I must be honest. When I first discovered this book, I was disappointed. Not because of its quality but because now I would have to pitch my notes for the book I was going to write on the same subject.

As a recent seminary graduate, I have read several books in the vein of "pastoral self-help" and was pleasantly surprised with this one.

Here you will find a wealth of practical tips and an aerial view of many of the common pitfalls to ministry.

The other outstanding feature of this work is the authors' ability to convey their message through stories and humor. The 19 chapters tackle a myriad of pastoral issues and entice the reader with titles like,"They're trying to suck you dry; are you providing the straws?"

Realizing that no review would be complete without a few complaints, I found myself concerned about several issues.

First, there were topics missing that I would have liked to see addressed, such as the importance of having an experienced mentor.

More importantly, however, I felt that the chapter concerning pastoral ethics ("Staying out of trouble and other people's beds") was weak. Outside of "decide to quit sinning" and some other pointers, I did not feel the book adequately addressed the critical issue of pastoral power abuse.

Finally, my biggest disappointment with this book was the title. "Things they never taught you in seminary" implies that this should interest only recent seminary graduates.

On the contrary, this book needs to be read by those who are contemplating church ministry, are part of a pastoral search committee, or anyone who cares about the health and future of their pastor.

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FILMS

Country Gumpkin

Forrest Gump, *written by Eric Roth, directed by Robert Zemeckis, produced by Wendy Finerman and Steve Tisch*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

Most summer movies glue their audience to their seats with car chases and exploding bombs. *Forrest Gump* captures its audience by letting a bumpkin from Alabama recite his life story to urbanites waiting at a bus stop.

All the coincidences of the world seem to land on Forrest Gump, a big heart with a substandard IQ. In a series of flashbacks, Gump (Tom Hanks) defeats probability to meet the personalities (Elvis Presley, Richard Nixon, John Lennon) and shape the events (Vietnam, Watergate, the Cold War) of U.S. history in the past 40 years.

Newsweek

Mr. Gump goes to Washington: *Nixon meets Gump (Tom Hanks).*

There's plenty of nostalgia here for the tears of sentimental souls and the grumblings of cynics. *Forrest Gump* starts out unbelievably optimistic and rolls into a kind of giddy magic realism as blessing after blessing falls on the naively good-natured Gump. Hanks, last year's Academy Awards winner for best actor, plays the unbelievable role so convincingly that his audience can actually accept the wacky plot and wrap their hearts around him.

Robin Wright brings a somber counterbalance to the film as Jenny, Gump's "girl." From a childhood of abuse, Jenny emerges black and blue from the '60s and '70s, beat up by leftist politics, cocaine and free love. Her quest for identity and the rantings of embittered Vietnam vet Lieutenant Dan (Gary Sinise) stir the waters of spiritual significance and give audiences more human characters to connect with.

The film breaks ground using special effects, placing Gump in coversations with presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. But while the special effects draw attention to themselves, they don't break the stride of the movie.

In the end, *Forrest Gump* doesn't leave us with any spiritual insight. Gump never does figure out "if we each have a destiny or if we're just floating around on a breeze. …" Nor does *Forrest Gump* provide a provocative analysis of the culture it observes. What it does provide is a heartwarming and enjoyable story.

Resources

- **Othniel** by James R. Shott (Herald Press, 1994, $6.95 U.S./$9.60 Cdn.) is a biblical novel of the life of Othniel, one of the judges in Israel. Part 6 of the People of the Promise series.
- **Spanish children's Sunday school materials** have been produced by the Latin America Anabaptist Resource Center (CLARA) in Colombia. The package contains teacher's guides, student activity booklets, pictures, audiocassette of songs, and more. Order from CLARA, apartado postal 57-527, Santafe de Bogota, Colombia, $25 U.S. per package.
- **Plain and Amish: An Alternative to Modern Pessimism** by Bernd G. Längin (Herald Press, 1994, $15.95 U.S./$21.95 Cdn.) combines sketches of Amish origins with reports of the author's months of living with an Amish family in Indiana. Includes maps, timeline, outline of Amish biblical principles and bibliography.
- **Why Do Christians Shoot Their Wounded? Helping (Not Hurting) Those with Emotional Difficulties** by Dwight L. Carlson, M.D. (InterVarsity, 1994, $10.99 U.S.) shows that many emotional hurts are as biologically based as cancer and heart disease.
- **101 Things to Do with a Dull Church** by Martin Wroe and Adrian Reith (InterVarsity, 1994, $6.99 U.S.) seeks to liven up the church through cartoons and comic relief. Includes do-it-yourself hymnwriting and fashion tips for pastors.
- **The Theology of the Hammer** by Millard Fuller (Smyth & Helwys, 1994, $9.95 U.S., 1-800-568-1248 or (912) 742-6329) tells the story of Habitat for Humanity.
- **Mature Christianity in the 21st Century** by Norman Beck (American Interfaith Institute and Crossroad Publishers, 1994, $24.95 U.S.) shows that contempt for Jews was neither the belief nor practice of Jesus, Paul or others and explains the factors that started the beginning of Christian anti-Judaism.
- **101 Effective Ideas Using Your Church Computer** and **Sources of Church Technology You Can Afford** by Steven K. Scott (Church Resources Corp., P.O. Box 200516, Arlington, TX 76006, 1-800-455-2585 or (817) 861-9535) helps churches use new computer technology for growth, evangelism, missions and outreach.
- **Listening for God: Contemporary Literature and the Life of Faith,** Paula J. Carlson and Peter S. Hawkins, eds. (Augsburg Fortress, 1994, $9.99 reader, $2.99 leader guide, $49.99 video) is an eight-session collection of essays by authors Annie Dillard, Garrison Keillor, Frederick Buechner, Alice Walker and others, investigating how life, theology and faith merge in surprising ways and places.

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Editorial

Beyond compassion fatigue

In the Gospel reading for Aug. 14 (John 6:35-51), Jesus calls himself "the bread of life." When we take communion we share the bread and cup and offer thanks. But too many around and among us cannot take this Eucharist (thanksgiving) because they have no bread to eat.

Emily Will offers stories (beginning on page 3 of this issue) of various people in the United States and Canada who suffer from hunger. We are used to seeing ads showing starving children in Africa or India. We send our money to help people overseas. But all around us are people (more than 30 million in the United States alone) who do not have enough to eat. One of those Emily writes about had been a Mennonite Central Committee worker in Africa.

We should not ignore people suffering in Rwanda or Haiti or Bosnia, but let's also open our eyes to our neighbors. It is so easy to wear blinders. We design our lives so that we do not encounter people in desperate need. How often have I walked past a person in need without a word, a thought or a glance? The homeless and hungry become invisible to us because we refuse to see them.

Once at a conference being held in a hotel, I walked across the lobby with other participants. An elderly man was mopping the floor nearby. I happened to notice him and on an impulse I smiled at him and said hi. He smiled broadly, nodded hello and continued his work. Meanwhile the 50 or so other people I was with walked on by.

What does it take to open our eyes? It often takes knowing someone who is hungry or homeless. It may mean experiencing deprivation ourselves.

Mark's Gospel recounts Jesus sending the 12 disciples on a mission to the surrounding villages. "He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts" (Mark 6:8). They had to depend on the hospitality of others.

Later, when Jesus and his disciples had gone to a deserted place to be alone, a crowd followed them. Given Jesus' schedule and how much he reached out to others, you could easily understand if he pleaded compassion fatigue and told the crowd to leave. However, Mark tells us, Jesus "had compassion for them" (6:34). The Greek word here for "compassion" literally means his "guts were torn apart." Somehow he drew energy from this strong emotion to give himself once more to helping these people.

'Now it's your turn': Soon the disciples came to Jesus and asked him to send the people away. But Jesus said to them, "You give them something to eat" (6:37). He might have said, "You have experienced hospitality from others; now it's your turn to show kindness to these people." The disciples did not know what to do. So Jesus took what bread they had, gave thanks and had them share it with the crowd. Soon everyone had eaten, and there was food left over.

We, too, may feel overwhelmed by the needs we learn about. But we can offer what we have in a spirit of thanksgiving, then let God multiply our gift.

We, too, may feel overwhelmed by the needs we learn about. But we can offer what we have in a spirit of thanksgiving, then let God multiply our gift. We cannot solve all problems on our own. But we can become more attentive to those needs we meet day by day and sense the nudging of God's Spirit to act.

The Mennonite Church of Colombia has brought a message to General Conference Mennonites in the United States and Canada (see page 12). With humility and profound concern they point to our wealth in resources of both money and skills. Yet we seem reluctant to use this wealth in reaching out to others in need and in working for the kingdom of God. Is God speaking to us through our brothers and sisters in Colombia? We should listen prayerfully to their message and consider what our response should be.

Jesus calls us to eat from the bread of life. And as we come to Jesus and find eternal life, he turns to us and says, "Give them something to eat." What do we say then? What do we do? *Gordon Houser*

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Sorting out the divine order / p. 12

MCC aids Rwandan refugees / p. 14

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 16
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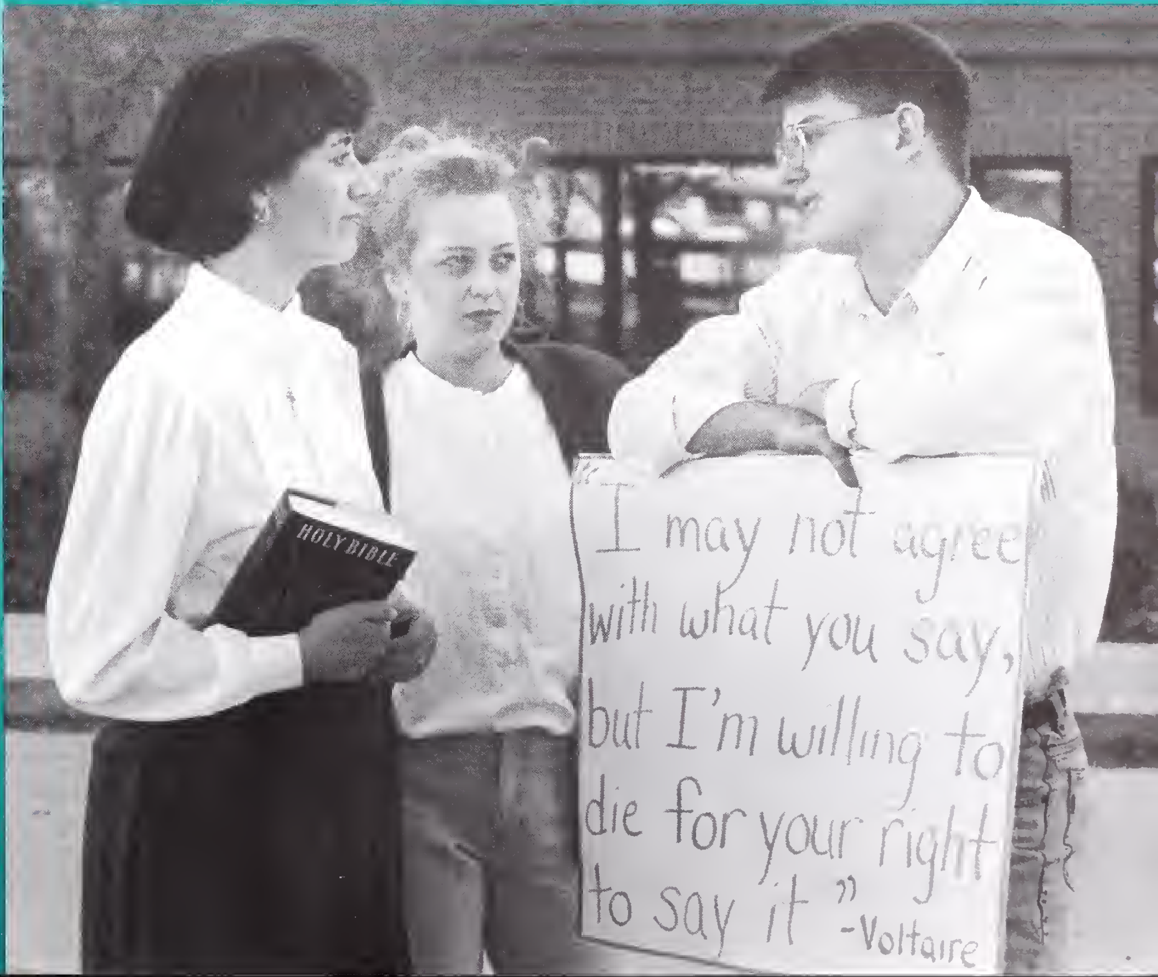
Can we agree to disagree?

- When bad fights happen to good people (see page 3)
- How do you cope? (see page 5)
- Release from rape (see page 7)


HOLY BIBLE
"I may not agree with what you say, but I'm willing to die for your right to say it" -Voltaire

Prologue

Last fall I had the opportunity to attend a conflict mediation training seminar sponsored by the Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center.

In those five days our group learned about the massive, growing field of conflict mediation. The article on page 3 serves as an introduction to mediation. "How do you cope?" on page 5 will help you understand some of your strengths and weaknesses in dealing with conflict. Use the resource list on page 6 to explore more on your own.

One woman's story of reconciliation with the man who raped her shows the potential of successful conflict mediation (page 7). Mediation centers like the one that facilitated her healing are spreading throughout the United States and Canada. Mennonites are at the forefront of much of this development.

A death row inmate speaks out about the death penalty (page 10). The story he shares reminds us of how often our penal system serves vindictive rather than restorative justice.

Our regular columnists share advice on giving to charity (J.B. Miller on page 11) and on appropriate husband-wife relationships (Sara Wenger Shenk on page 12). Emily Will on page 13 introduces us to an MCC staffer who overcame a cold past with a warm spirit. Let his story inspire us to confront conflict with hope for healing. *lp*

Next issue: The plight of children

Cover: Photo by Vada Snider

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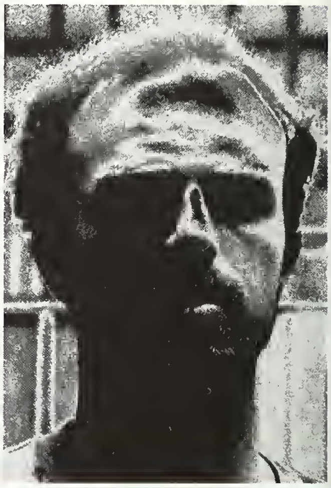

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General Conference Mennonite Church

When bad fights happen in good churches

Sometimes God calls us into conflict.

> ***Conflict is necessary for growth. It often leads to needed change and can enhance the dignity of everyone involved. If it is handled correctly.***

Larry Penner

Janet left First Mennonite* for good. She thought worship was cold and members had forgotten how to love.

Her friend Bob still attends, but he is ready to leave, too. After seeing how the church pushed Janet away, he wonders what kind of fellowship he is part of and questions the ability of Mary, the pastor, to inspire the congregation to care.

Bob has shared his discontent with the deacons, who are divided. Some share Bob's doubts about pastor Mary, saying they have received similar complaints about her leadership and questions about her concern for the church.

The other deacons think Mary needs more time. She has only been at the church a few months, and the church has been having trouble keeping any pastor for a substantial length of time.

The deacons confront Mary about her perceived lack of ability, and she is shocked. Before taking this pastorate, she would not have believed so many charges could mount against her in five months. One by one the deacons who still support her are being won over. She knows the clock is ticking. In the narthex the previous Sunday, she overheard names being suggested for a search committee.

At First Mennonite the pastor is a lightning rod. Unable to talk to each other, feuding church members redirect their anger to the most obvious target. The church has called and discharged three pastors in six years. Mary will be the fourth.

First Mennonite is trapped. What started out as minor misunderstandings have escalated and multiplied. Emotions are hot, but church meetings are cool, until the crowd disperses into the parking lot, where people regroup in muttering clusters that show where real alliances lie.

Still waters: The members of First Mennonite are not villains. They are

---

**First Mennonite is not a real church.*

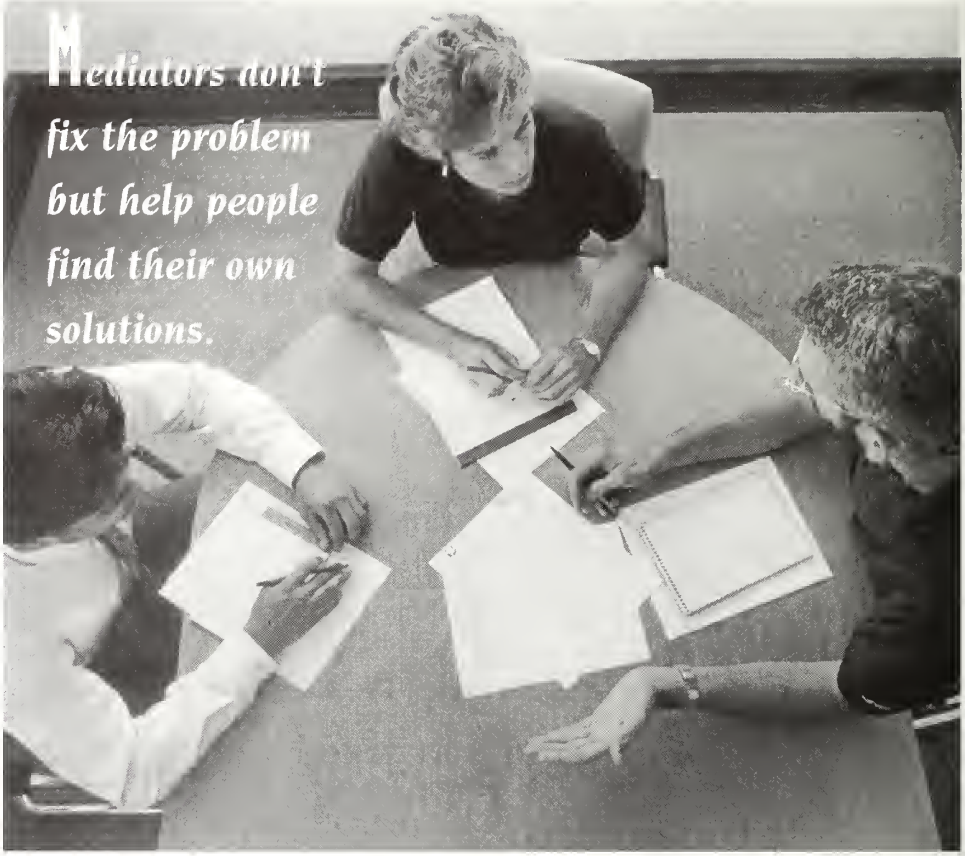
committed Christians who want to follow Christ in their lives and in their church. But somewhere they learned that the peace of Christ is a peace of silence. Disagreement and hurt are not brought up and the waters remain still.

Members of First Mennonite think conflict is bad. They don't think disagreements can be confronted without someone getting hurt. They pull away when issues get hot.

The members of First Mennonite are wrong. Conflict is necessary for growth. It often leads to needed change and can enhance the dignity of everyone involved. If it is handled correctly.

And the reality is that the members of First Mennonite are not avoiding conflict. They are simply dealing with

There are strategies to mediating conflict. And they can be learned.



Mediators don't fix the problem but help people find their own solutions.

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Glossary

Triangling: talking to a third party about someone you disagree with or are upset with rather than going directly to the person with whom you disagree. People triangle because they are afraid to confront disagreement directly. Triangling can be a way to seek affirmation that "I am right, she is wrong." People may also try to strengthen their relationship with someone else by teaming up against a third party.

De-triangling strategies: ways to avoid getting caught in triangling. When people come to you to complain about somebody else, encourage them to talk directly with that person. They may want you to agree that the other person is bad or wrong. They are seeking your validation. Validate them in other ways but do not take their side against someone else. If they say, "Mary is an insensitive pastor," don't answer, "Yes, I know." Say, "Have you talked to her about it?" If you also have felt that Mary has been insensitive, talk to Mary about it.

Mediator: a person who helps two or more parties work through a conflict that divides them. Mediators do not solve problems. They help people in conflict find their own answers by helping identify contentious issues, clarify feelings and needs and encourage imaginative solutions. Often mediators work in teams. People can receive training to become a mediator through several programs.

Paraphrasing: restating to someone else in your own words what you have just heard them say. Paraphrasing ensures active listening to the other person and gives that person a chance to say, "Yes, you do understand what I'm saying."

Win-win solutions

Richard Blackburn, director of the Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center, shared this anecdote at a mediation training workshop in Newton, Kan., in November 1993:

A daughter and son asked their mother for an orange. There was only one left. Wearied by the children's bickering, the mother picked up a knife and sliced the orange in half, giving a half to each child, then sent them both to their rooms.

The son closed his door and peeled his half of the orange. After gobbling down the fruit, he threw the peel in the wastebasket in the corner.

Across the hall, the daughter sat down to do a collage. After hastily peeling off the skin from her half of the orange, she pasted it to her masterpiece—the finishing touch. Satisfied, she threw the unwanted fruit in the wastebasket.

it in poor ways. People don't speak directly to each other when they disagree. Instead they *triangle* (see Glossary, p. 4): Janet speaks to Bob about Mary rather than go directly to Mary.

Strategy: There are strategies for mediating conflict. And those strategies can be learned. Conflict mediation undergraduate and graduate programs are spreading across North America. High schools are teaching mediation skills to teachers and students. Mennonite Central Committee has an office of conflict mediation. Churches are developing their own mediation teams.

Had Bob attended a mediation workshop, he may have learned *detriangling strategies* that would help him not take sides but encourage Janet to go directly to Mary.

Much of the work of learning to handle conflict is learning to communicate. Listening well reduces hostility. Expressions of concern reassure people that they can voice their hurts without fear of rejection.

Often people caught in conflict have trouble separating the issues from the people in conflict. Bob is angry that Janet left the church. He may not even be aware of all the reasons why she left. Conflict management skills could help Bob separate his issue—that Janet left—from the person he sees as the cause—Mary. Those skills could help Bob press hard toward resolving the issue—why Janet left and how the church can be more welcoming—without coming down hard on the people, in this case Mary.

Sometimes sorting out the issues seems impossible. People trained in conflict mediation recognize the value of having a trained *mediator* to help facilitate conflict. Mediators don't fix the problem but help people find their own solutions. And mediators don't have to be professionals. They can be church members who have participated in a mediation workshop or volunteered with a mediation agency.

Trained mediators set an example. They move toward conflict and invite disagreement. Much of their role is modeling effective listening. One tool for this is *paraphrasing*: one disputant retells the other disputant's perspective on the issue. This helps disputants understand, and feel understood by, each other.

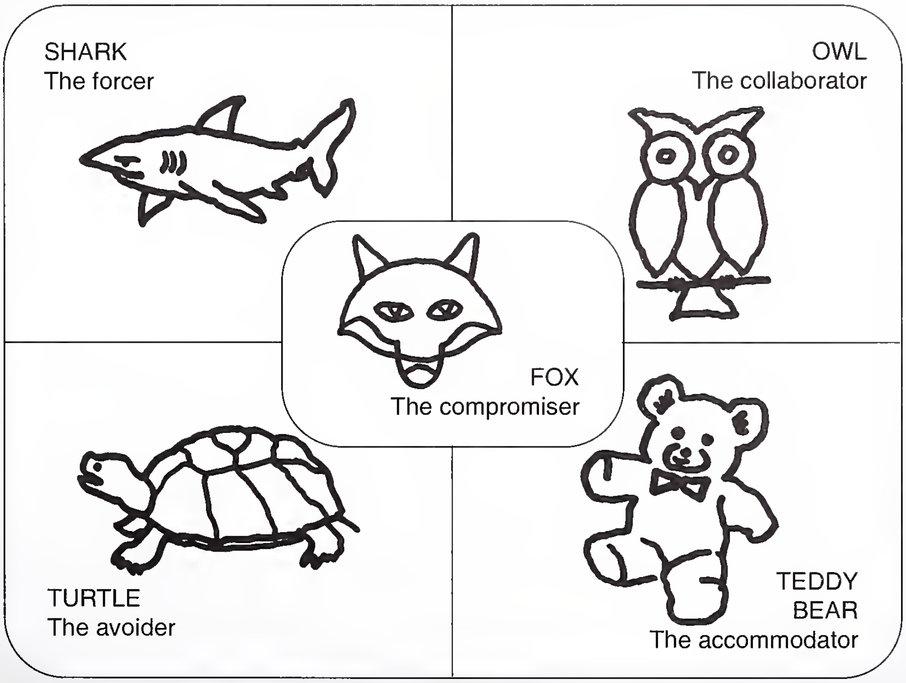
Getting messy: Mediators do not try to simplify problems. They set out

How do you cope?

Different people handle conflict differently. Five ways, characterized by animals that represent them, are shown here.

Foxes: Consumate negotiators, foxes value both goals and relationships somewhat, but recognize there will be some give and take to reach middle ground. Theirs is the art of compromise, but their solutions often leave a vague sense of dissatisfaction on both sides.

Sharks: Placing high value on achieving their goals and low value on maintaining their relationships, sharks force decisions to go their way, making enemies in the process.



Owls: Valuing both their goals and their relationships, owls wisely hold out for more options, concentrating on finding an agreement that satisfies both themselves and others.

Teddy Bears: Valuing relationships but not goals, teddy bears cave in, willing to accept suffering as the cost of maintaining friendship.

Turtles: Not valuing their relationships or their goals enough to risk conflict, in fear turtles pull into their shell, avoiding confrontation.

Based on notes from a workshop by Richard Blackburn to make problems more complex, asking questions and probing deeper until the truth, the hurt behind the hurt, is exposed. Mediators avoid quick solutions that may not address all aspects of the conflict.

People often avoid conflict because they believe they will have to "give in" or give up something they value in compromise. A mediator helps people see that if they are creative, they may come up with solutions not yet thought of, solutions in which both parties win.

What will happen to First Mennonite? Maybe with some simple training toward better communication things will work out. Maybe the issues lie too deep. They can hire an experienced mediator, whose bill may run into thousands of dollars—a big price tag but a fraction of what the church spent on its building plan. Perhaps they will get financial help from their church conference. Or they may go on hoping the issues that lie hidden will just go away.

Conflict will always be with us. Without it we will lose our impetus for change. We have a choice: to be torn apart by conflict or to be bound together by it.

Larry Penner is assistant editor of The Mennonite. *He attended a Mediation Skills Training Institute in November 1993 sponsored by the Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center.*

Trained mediators set an example. They move toward conflict and invite disagreement.

Skjold Photographs

Books, tapes, workshops...

- **Conflict in the Church: Division or Diversity?** (Mennonite Conciliation Service, 1988) is a 12-minute video overview of conflict in the church with study guide and suggested resources.
- **Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In** by Roger Fisher and William Ury (Penguin Books, 1991) is an easy-to-read book about "win-win" or interest-based negotiation.
- **Mediation Training Manual** (Mennonite Conciliation Service, 1992) includes over 250 pages of conflict management skills training materials, including chapters on theology of conflict, social conflict theory, communication skills, interpersonal and group/congregational conflict intervention.
- **Moving Your Church Through Conflict**, Speed Leas (Alban Institute, 1985) provides a description of how conflicts develop within congregations and strategies for people who wish to lead their congregations through conflict.
- **When Good People Quarrel: Studies of Conflict Resolution** by Robert Kreider and Rachel Waltner Goossen (Herald Press, 1989) shares present-day and biblical case studies that invite one to play peacemaking roles—includes Scripture passages and discussion questions.
- **When You Disagree ...** (Mennonite Conciliation Service, 1987) is an audiocassette tape series designed to teach skills for dealing with conflict. Tape input and discussion/exercise guides for 10 one-hour sessions.

To contact mediators or program/training opportunities in the United States, contact Mennonite Conciliation Service and related organizations, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-3889.

In Canada, contact Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Conciliation Services of Canada, 50 Kent Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1; (519) 745-8458.

Release from rape

How mediation helped one woman let go of her anger

For 24 years, Diane M. lived constantly with the nightmare of the day she was raped. The traumatic effect of the 1968 assault ended her first marriage and severely threatened her second. “There was not a night that I didn’t remember [the rape] at some time,” she says. Fear and suspicion of men dominated her life.

But all that changed in 1992, when she was able to forgive the man who raped her.

Her release from fear came as a result of her participation with the Pacific Region Victim Offender Mediation Pilot Project in Langley, B.C. After learning about the project she called its director, Dave Gustafson. He encouraged her to consider the program, which facilitates communication—written, by video or face-to-face—between victims and offenders.

Even though she knew her rapist, Don (not his real name), was in the Kingston, Ont., penitentiary, she did not feel safe. “There was always something in the back of my mind,” says Diane, who lives in British Columbia. Having him locked up, she says, “didn’t make me feel better.”

Even though she knew her rapist was in jail, she did not feel safe.

File photo for illustration purposes only

Her husband was against her participating in the program, and she was hesitant herself. She almost withdrew from the program when Gustafson mentioned that he was a pastor before he began working full time in mediation. Gustafson pastored Langley (B.C.) Mennonite Fellowship, the church that started Langley’s mediation program.

“My back went up,” Diane says. “I’m an agnostic. I didn’t have any respect for church people as a group [before participating in the program].”

Dealing with it: But she decided to go ahead, because of a need to “say my piece” to Don, to regain some control in a situation that had developed entirely against her will. She wanted to deal with the story she had been “packing around for 24 years.”

When she learned that Don had been trying for several years to communicate with her, she was convinced that she

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> ***"All I can say is that my healing was instantaneous after I sent my first letter to him. It ended 24 years of struggle."***
>
> **Diane M.**

should participate in the program. She wrote him a poem in which she asked him what had been in his mind the day he attacked her. Don responded. After several months of communication between them, Diane now can say that "I respect him … he's a changed person." She believes "100 percent that he is sincere" in his admission of guilt (an issue because he had not been convicted of raping her; he was convicted not long after of several other sexual assaults), and in his determination to change.

Diane notes that Don has been a member of Alcoholics Anonymous for some time now and has educated himself. She says it helped to see his eyes in a video he sent, eyes that she says "showed a lot of pain." She says she would like to meet Don now, if she had a chance. She hopes that he will be able to get out of jail, where he has spent most of his life since 1968.

Freed of the nightmares: Diane does not make such statements lightly. "I can't explain why the mediation process worked for me, and I can't say it would work for everyone. All I can say is that my healing was instantaneous after I sent my first letter to him. It ended 24 years of struggle. The nightmares and the hate in my heart are gone."

Her participation in the program also had a positive effect on her husband. "Outstanding, overwhelming, wonderful, marvelous, priceless and great are all words that I've used [to describe the mediation process], but they still fall short of describing the results that we have been beneficiaries of," he said in a letter to Gustafson (see box below).

Diane also praises the Victim Offender Mediation Pilot Project. "I'm a backer," she says, adding that she regards the personal process offered by mediation as superior to what she experienced in the courts.

She says that she would now like to help other women who have been through situations similar to hers. "I think mediation can help other victims of rape, if the timing is right in their lives," she says.

This article is based on a report by Flyn Ritchie that was originally published in Christian Info News.

A husband's reconciliation

After Diane M. participated in mediation with the man who raped her, her husband sent a letter to Dave Gustafson, director of the Langley (B.C.) Victim Offender Mediation Program, from which these excerpts are taken.

Upon first being told of the program, I was skeptical and afraid that there was more harm than good from putting my wife's healing in the hands of the offender.

However, because of the way these matters were handled with care and understanding by you and your staff, not only were my fears erased, but I have become convinced that your program is of enormous value to society in general.

I had to deal with my feelings toward the offender, which were that he should be confined and punished forever, and any talk of his healing stuck in my craw. I now realize that offenders do eventually rejoin society, and if healing on their behalf has not been achieved, then there is a chance of more harm being done.

Also it has become clear to me that most offenders themselves are victims and that some of their victims go on themselves to become offenders. The cost of this cycle to society is astronomical, and therefore the value to society of breaking this cycle is also astronomical.

In the case of our family before your intervention, we were on a course for destruction at the expense of our children and the mental and emotional health of my wife and me.

Now we are a much healthier family. My wife has peace of mind, and we are raising our children in a way that should make them contributors to society in the future.

Letters

The search for truth

We note from time to time a lament about the independence of our General Conference Mennonites, and we do have a price to pay for that habit. On the other hand, if the Protestant reformers had been content to "let well enough alone" there would have been no Reformation, and had our Anabaptist forebears been content to let well enough alone there would be no Mennonite churches. The search for truth requires some independence. We are glad that our church papers are open to the search for truth. *Orville and Mabel Baer, Trenton, Ill.*

Giant step backward

I too want to give a resounding "amen" to the recent letters to *The Mennonite* by Leann Toevs (May 24 issue), Erwin C. Goering (June 14 issue) and Waldo Waltner (July 26 issue) concerning the dismissal of Robert Hull as secretary of peace and justice by the Commission on Home Ministries.

I am convinced that we are taking a giant step backward. Peace and justice are unique and foremost priorities of the Anabaptist God-given vision. That we were falling short in keeping this vision is made evident by the increasing number of our members who endorse war. We often speak of being loyal to "God and country." We name God first, but when conflict arises we reverse the order. Where in the Bible are we commanded to commit mass murder to protect our national interests? To commit a single murder is to face death or life imprisonment. To drop a massive amount of artillery on thousands of people makes one a decorated hero. How can we justify that? Where are our priorities?

John F. Kennedy said, "Mankind must end war or war will end mankind." How can we give this truth more prominence unless we keep it in the minds of the people?

I sincerely hope that we can reverse the action of the Commission on Home Ministries. *Hilda W. Krahn, North Newton, Kan.*

Mennonite Church of Christ

For 43 years my husband and I have been integrated (he a GC, I an MC). In our work with Mennonite Central Committee in Germany after [World War II] we all felt integrated no matter what our church affiliation was.

Why can't more of our churches that send MCC workers decide on integration when the workers themselves feel that way? The "do" in us integrates, helping poverty and war victims and others who suffer, but the "be" in us does not. Why not?

Mennonite Central Committee has one name. If our churches had one name, integration would be easier. What about the name "Mennonite Church of Christ" (MCofC) to parallel MCC? This could be our umbrella name and under that name could go our present names or any name our churches and organizations choose.

Why wait until the year 2003 to integrate wholly? It is costly for committees and conferences to meet to discuss integration, costly in money and time. Let's become one church at the 75th anniversary of MCC in July 1995. We are already planning a joint conference for the same time. Let's become the Mennonite Church of Christ, or another suitable name, 75 years after several of our churches united to organize MCC. What a beautiful God-blessed event that would be! *Geraldine Harder, North Newton, Kan.*

News story inaccurate

As a congregation, we wish to clarify several misunderstandings regarding St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship.

Last November St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship called in the Northern District conference minister to assist our congregation in dealing with an issue of harassment and verbal abuse against the pastor and others in the congregation. With the guidance of the Northern District Conference and much prayer we worked through this issue and came to a decision as a congregation. Several people who disagreed with the decision left the congregation without trying to reconcile their differences. Other members who were tired and frustrated by the severity of the harassment subsequently left as well.

The article in the July 12 issue (page 16) implies inaccurately that the issue of homosexuality has been a volatile one for our congregation. During the past few years we have fostered a spirit of dialogue on the issue of same-sex relationships in an open, caring and respectful manner. While the issue of homosexuality was not directly related to the harassment we experienced as a congregation, it subsequently was used by some who left the congregation to cover up the original issue of harassment and as a weapon to bring harm to the continuing members of the congregation.

The article that appeared in *The Mennonite* also failed to point out that in spite of repeated invitations for personal dialogue, the individuals who sent hurtful letters and anonymous mailings about our congregation have never communicated their concerns directly with the individuals in our congregation who are gay and lesbian.

We are thankful for the support we have felt from individuals, other congregations and conference leadership as we struggle to worship and be a community of God's people in spite of the anger targeted at our congregation. We pray that those who have voiced their concerns in hurtful, anonymous ways will find the grace to begin to communicate with us in a direct and respectful manner. *St. Paul (Minn.) Mennonite Fellowship*

Ideas your church can try

Maplewood Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., and **First Mennonite Church**, Berne, Ind., held a choir exchange on two consecutive Sunday evenings last March. Both choirs joined to present a program at each church.

First Mennonite Church, Hutchinson, Kan., organizes a "calling tree" as a way for church members to be in touch when needs for care or prayer arise. **New Creation Fellowship**, Newton, Kan., has a similar arrangement, which it calls a "prayer chain."

To kill a human

Can a society that electrocutes a man have self-respect?

Michael Ross

When we abolished the punishment for treason that you should be hanged and then cut down while still alive, then disemboweled while still alive, and then quartered, we did not abolish that punishment because we sympathized with traitors but because we took the view that this was a punishment no longer consistent with our self-respect."

These words, spoken by Lord Chancellor Gardiner during the 1965 death penalty abolition debates in the British Parliament, illustrate the feeling of most individuals opposed to capital punishment. It's not sympathy toward the murderer that we feel, indeed most of us feel anger and revulsion toward murderers. Our objection is that, simply put, executions degrade us all.

In today's society, the execution process is far removed from most individual citizens. We may or may not be aware of the criminal acts that put an individual on death row, but few of us know the human being whom society has condemned to death.

We need to be aware of the human side of executions. And to do so I'd like to share with you an extract from an affidavit by David Bruck, an attorney who stayed with a condemned man, Terry Roach, during the last hours before his execution:

"I assisted with Terry Roach's defense during the last month before his execution, and I spent the last four hours with Terry Roach in his cell before he was electrocuted on Jan. 10, 1986. …

"Although Terry was 25 years old at the time of his death, he seemed very childlike. In general, his demeanor and his reactions to the people around him appeared to me to comport with the finding, made at his last psychological evaluation, that his IQ was 70—a score that placed his intellectual functioning at about the level of a 12-year-old. When his family minister showed him some prayers from the Bible that they would read together, Terry asked him which ones he thought would be especially likely to help him into heaven. His questions about this seemed based on the childish assumption that one prayer was likely to 'work' better than another and that he just needed some advice about which ones would work best. Later in the night, he asked me to read him a long letter about reincarnation that a man from California had sent to him just that day. He listened to the letter with wonder, like a small child at bedtime, trusting and uncritical. [I was] struck by how calmed Terry seemed by a voice reading to him in the resonant cell, and [I] spent much of the remaining time reading to him while he listened, gazing at [me] with rapt attention.

He tried to pretend that the shaving of his head and right leg and the prolonged rubbing in of electrical conducting gel were normal.

Rehearsal: "He had a final statement which his girlfriend had helped him write. When I arrived that night, the statement was on three small scraps of paper, in his girlfriend's handwriting. I copied it out for him and got him to read it out loud a few times. No matter how many times he tried, the word 'enemies' came out 'emenies.' He kept practicing it, but pronouncing the written word just seemed beyond his capabilities. Still, he seemed to like the rehearsal—like everything we did that night, it filled the time and acknowledged that he was doing something difficult.

"Terry was a passive young man, and that showed all through the night. Although he was obviously frightened, he was as cooperative as possible with the guards, and he tried to pretend that all of the ritual preparation—the shaving of his head and right leg, the prolonged rubbing in of electrical conducting gel—was all a normal sort of thing to have happen. He wanted the approval of those around him, and he seemed well aware that this night he could gain everyone's approval by being brave and keeping his fear at bay.

"Still, when the warden appeared in the cell door at 5 a.m. and read the death warrant, while Terry stood, each wrist immobilized in a manacle known as the 'claw,' his left leg began to shake in large, involuntary movements. After that everything happened quickly. I walked to the chair with him and talked to him as much as I could. He wanted me to read his statement, but I told him that he ought to try, and I'd read it if he couldn't. His voice was only a little shaky, and he managed quite well, except for 'emenies.' After he had repeated the name of a friend of mine who had recently died, and whom he had offered to look up for me when he got to heaven, I left him and walked to the witness area, where I gave him a 'thumbs-up' sign. He signaled back with his fingers, as much as the straps permitted. We signaled to each other once more just before the mask was pulled down over his face.

"A few seconds later the current hit. Terry's body snapped back and was held frozen the whole time the current ran through his body. After a few seconds steam began to rise from his body, and the skin on his thighs just above the electrodes began to distend and blister. His fists were clenched and very white. His body slumped when the power was turned off, and jerked erect again when it resumed. When he was declared dead, several guards wrestled his body out of the chair and onto a stretcher, while taking care to conceal his face (no longer covered by the mask) from the view of the witnesses and me by covering it with a sheet. I left the death house at about this time in the company of the warden. As we stepped out of the building, I heard the whoops of a crowd of about 150 or 200 demonstrators who had apparently come to celebrate the execution, and who were yelling and cheering outside the prison gates."

Executions degrade us all. They are held in the middle of the night, in the dark, away from us all, to hide what they really are. The men who are condemned to death are dehumanized by the state and by the press to make it easier to carry out their executions. And the public is kept as far away as possible from the whole process to keep them from seeing that human beings, real flesh and blood, real people, are being put to death. That is the only way that any state or government can continue executions without the public demanding their eradication.

It is time for us to acknowledge capital punishment for what it really is and to abolish it nationwide. There are suitable alternatives. For example, in my state those convicted of capital crimes, who are not sentenced to death, are sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of release. It is not necessary to kill criminals, not even the most reprehensible ones, and to continue to do so truly lowers us to the levels of the ones we wish to punish. And undoubtedly degrades us all.

Michael Ross is a condemned man on Connecticut's death row. He has been on death row since June 1987.

What can you do?

Several organizations are working hard to rid the United States of capital punishment. Contact one or more of the following:

- **National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty**, 918 F St. NW, 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20004; (202) 347-2510;
- **Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation**, 2093 Willow Creek Road, Portage, IN 46368; (219) 763-2170;
- **Catholics Against Capital Punishment**, P.O. Box 3125, Arlington, VA 22203; (703) 522-5014;
- **Amnesty International USA, Campaign to Abolish the Death Penalty**, 322 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10001; (212) 807-8400;
- **American Civil Liberties Union, Capital Punishment Project**, 122 Maryland Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20002; (202) 675-2319.

Fiscal health

Guidelines for giving to charities

Giving today demands we be wise as serpents, innocent as sheep.

J.B. Miller

Most of us are contacted frequently by fund-raisers, development officers or other people engaged in the function of raising money for charities. Sometimes we give because of guilt, sometimes to get rid of the fund-raiser, but most often, I hope, we give from a commitment to and belief in the organization's mission. We all want to be generous and support the organizations we feel are doing good in the world.

Over the last several years, however, much attention has been given by the U.S. and Canadian media to charities that abuse their public trust. Certain organizations have seen declines in their contributions because of this attention. Sometimes the attention has focused on misuse of funds, sometimes on the small percentage of money raised that actually goes to help people in need, and other times on seemingly exorbitant salaries paid to charity executives. As a donor you should always exercise care when giving to a charitable organization, and particular care should be given when donating to an unfamiliar organization. To help donors make good giving decisions, the following tips are adapted from The Council of Better Business Bureaus Inc.:

1. Ask lots of questions about the organization, and don't give to any organization until you are satisfied with the answers. Charities running a respectable program will gladly encourage your interest.

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

2. Never give money on the spot to organizations that are unfamiliar to you. The charity that needs your money will welcome it just as much tomorrow as today.

3. Make all contributions by check made payable to the organization, not to the individual collecting the donation.

4. Keep records of your (U.S.) donations to make tax preparation easier. The value of your volunteer time is not deductible, but out-of-pocket expenses (including transportation) are.

5. Don't be misled by the name of the organization. Impressive-sounding names never tell how funds are used.

6. Watch mail appeals. They should clearly identify the charity and describe its programs. Beware of appeals that bring tears to your eyes but tell you little about the charity or its program.

7. Appeals should never be disguised as bills or invoices. It is illegal to mail a bill, invoice or statement of account due that is an appeal for funds unless it bears a clear and noticeable disclaimer.

8. It is against the law to demand payment for unordered merchandise. You are under no obligation to pay for or return such merchandise.

9. When asked to buy items like candy, magazines or tickets, be sure to ask what the charity's share of the sale will be.

Never give due to guilt or to get rid of the person, but give often and give generously. Maybe once or twice you might even offer to buy a meal for a person begging on the street. It will make you feel good, and God loves a cheerful giver.

Sara Wenger Shenk is author of Coming Home *(Good Books, 1992), from which this article is exerpted. She lives in Harrisonburg, Va.*

Back to Eden

Were men really ordained to govern women?

Sara Wenger Shenk

Some people suggest that if we would just adhere once again to a "God-ordained" family order, much of what has gone awry in family life would fall quickly back into place.

Such comments assume that a recovery of the proper order would right something that's gone terribly wrong with family life. What is this God-ordained order?

In my experience "order" terminology is used as shorthand for the vertical, hierarchical view of God over husband over wife over children over dog. The husband is authorized to be the spiritual "head" of the home and of his wife. Her responsibility is to submit to his "headship," which means that he gets his way and she is supposed to give in.

Such a view of "proper order" has done incalculable damage to family relationships. It is "to canonize the fall," writes Donald Joy in *Bonding*. Male-female relationships often begin with an innocent sense of mutual respect and joint partnership. But when they are bent into conformity to this traditional "Christian" hierarchical order, Joy says, a deformity occurs: The woman is taught to serve her husband unquestioningly, losing her own vital connection to God, while the man regards his wife as another part of the world he must control to achieve his own ends.

When do these "order advocates" acknowledge that in Jesus, whose kingdom is upside down, patterns that permitted males to lord over females simply because of gender are now overturned? How tragic to determine the patterns of marriage according to a curse placed on Adam and Eve after they disobeyed God, rather than on what it means to be new creatures in Christ!

Any discussion of marriage that attempts to take seriously the biblical witness must look at the meanings of "headship" and "submission" in the New Testament. Since headship has traditionally implied control and decision making, while submission has meant a passive falling-in-line, any use of the words is suspect.

What do we do with the biblical material? Do we reject any concept of headship? Is there any mystery to male-female roles in marriage that is lost if we simply see roles as interchangeable?

Paul's instructions to husbands and wives in Ephesians 5:21-33 preserve the traditional view of a husband as head, writes theologian Elizabeth Achtemeier, but what is *meant* by headship is transformed. There is no "lording it over" but a full devotion of love and self-giving by the husband for the wife. What more perfect pattern for marriage could there be, Achtemeier asks: "Who can improve on the love of Christ for us?"

> **How tragic to determine the patterns of marriage according to a curse placed on Adam and Eve rather than on what it means to be new creatures in Christ!**

In a remarkable way this understanding of headship overcomes the negative consequences of the curse. If the curse created an imbalance of power, then for a husband to love his wife and give himself up for her means taking the initiative in righting the imbalance. In other words, "headship" means taking primary responsibility to nurture the full restoration of a woman's freedom to thrive as an equal partner.

Mutual submission then will be expressed by the husband in loving service to empower his wife. The wife will express her submission in respect appropriate toward one who puts her well-being above his own. Whether the marriage appears to be a traditional one with clear-cut roles or a nontraditional one, where these dynamics are at work, there will be a balanced grace, a mutual welcome reminiscent of Eden.

The marvel of the Genesis account, Achtemeier writes, is that the writer could look beyond the structure of his own society and see that the subordination of woman was not God's original intent, but was the result of our sin. It is beyond explanation how the writer could grasp that, instead of the oneness God had planned, the rule of man over woman was a distortion, a consequence of our proud attempt to live out our lives apart from God. It flies in the face of all customs and beliefs in civilizations of the ancient world, Achtemeier writes.

The writer of Genesis must have been grasped by the most radical revelation of God's desire for his universe. Today that vision returns us with renewed passion to Eden's delights of true marital companionship.

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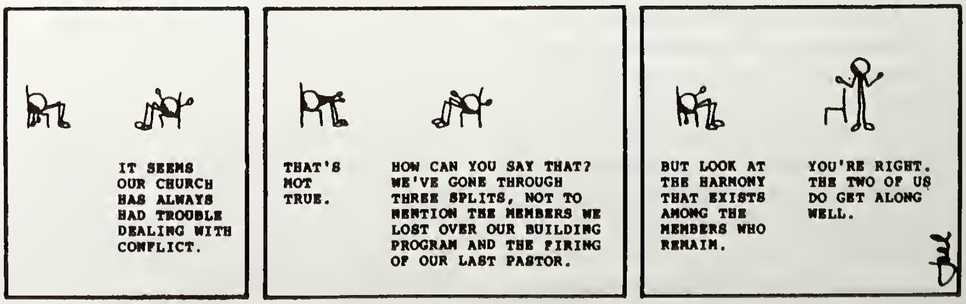
IT SEEMS OUR CHURCH HAS ALWAYS HAD TROUBLE DEALING WITH CONFLICT.
THAT'S NOT TRUE.
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT? WE'VE GONE THROUGH THREE SPLITS, NOT TO MENTION THE MEMBERS WE LOST OVER OUR BUILDING PROGRAM AND THE FIRING OF OUR LAST PASTOR.
BUT LOOK AT THE HARMONY THAT EXISTS AMONG THE MEMBERS WHO REMAIN.
YOU'RE RIGHT. THE TWO OF US DO GET ALONG WELL.

Profile

From a Dickens childhood to Christian service

Abandoned as a 9-year-old, Doug Deline did not become bitter

Emily Will

Doug Deline has brought an unlikely mix of work and life experiences to his job as a maintenance worker at Mennonite Central Committee headquarters in Akron, Pa., the past four years.

As an adult Doug has worked as an engineer in the Canadian navy, a Holiday Inn dishwasher and then banquet manager, a wilderness fishing guide in northern Manitoba, a counselor in a group home for troubled adults, a school-bus driver and co-owner of a house renovation business.

"I've even carried bodies to the morgue," Doug says, referring to a stint as a hospital security officer.

While Doug hasn't put that last "skill" to use at MCC, his versatility has proved helpful in a job that includes a wide variety of tasks. "Doug is adaptable and willing to do whatever is asked of him," says Lynn Brenneman, MCC maintenance manager.

The ability to perform a variety of chores was also essential to Doug's well-being during a tragic childhood. His parents separated, abandoning 9-year-old Doug and three younger siblings. For a year, Doug says, he kept the children together, stealing food from grocery stores or begging from other children's lunches at school to survive.

Canada's children's welfare department then intervened. The children were separated, and Doug was sent to the first of the 20 foster homes—mostly farm homes—he would live in for the next nine years. His stories of the foster homes resound of Dickens.

In some three-quarters of the homes "we (the foster children) were treated as casual labor," Doug says. "In some places we did all the work while the people sat around. In one place we were given macaroni and cheese to eat in the cellar while the foster family ate steak and potatoes upstairs. In another place, they chained us to our beds at night so we wouldn't run away."

"I learned to get along so I could avoid beatings," he says. Getting along meant adapting to different people's personalities and learning how to perform farm and household chores quickly and efficiently—milking cows, cutting hay, washing dishes, weeding gardens.

Lorin Beidler(MCC)

Happy family: *Mary, Sandy, Doug and Michael Deline*

None of his foster parents were Mennonite, although some were Christian. Doug met his wife, Sandy, while attending a church with one foster family.

"Either you become bitter and hate the world or you get on with your life," Doug says. "I'm easy-going and I don't think it's in my nature to become bitter. There are a few people I'd like to punch in the nose for what they did, but that's not the Christian way."

Doug says he has always considered himself a pacifist. He joined the navy simply because he had no place else to go where he could be assured of food, clothes and a bed.

Doug's large, muscular build combined with his friendly disposition leads Brenneman to joke, "He looks like a gorilla and has the heart of a teddy bear."

Brenneman and others who know Doug well are impressed with his ability to make friends of all backgrounds and with his willingness to help others. "His faith is all action, no speech," Brenneman says.

After learning how to roast pigs from a Puerto Rican man who works with Sandy, Doug hosted several pig roasts for his Akron neighbors, MCC staff and Sandy's colleagues. He donned his clown suit to entertain children and paint faces when his Puerto Rican friend helped plan a block party in downtown Lancaster. Doug also delights MCC service workers' children by dressing as Santa Claus at Christmastime, and delivering small gifts to them.

"Someone with a background like Doug's could feel not a part of the Mennonite world, but Doug is always open about who he is—a take it or leave it attitude—and he has been accepted because of this," says Lorraine Stutzman-Amstutz, program coordinator of the Akron service unit.

The Delines are moving from Akron but they won't be leaving MCC. They will be working with MCC British Columbia at the Clearbrook (B.C.) Achievement Center, an agency where adults with developmental disabilities learn life skills. Sandy will serve as supervisor, and Doug will work with the clients as they learn social skills and work attitudes.

Doug's dream is to someday run his own fishing camp. His sojourns in northern Canada's wilderness, inaccessible by roads and cut off from phone contact, are "my time with God, my regenerative period," he says.

The couple, from Winnipeg, has two children—Mary, 15, and Michael, 13. Their home church is Trinity Baptist in Winnipeg.

Emily Will writes for Mennonite Central Committee.

Sr. Camille D'Arienzo is pushing a "Declaration of Life" statement to oppose the death penalty. The two-page statement, which requires notarization, states: "I hereby declare that should I die as a result of a violent crime, I request that the person or persons found guilty of homicide for my killing not be subject to or put in jeopardy of the death penalty under any circumstances, no matter how heinous their crime or how much I may have suffered." The declaration instructs family and friends to deliver copies to the judge overseeing the case, the attorneys, the county recorder and the media. D'Arienzo is president of the Brooklyn (N.Y.) regional community of the Sisters of Mercy. New York Governor Mario Cuomo signed a declaration in July. Attorneys say that although the statement cannot stop prosecutor, judge or jury from pursuing the death penalty, the statement could influence their opinions. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Maybe what the church needs is a little adversity. Alemu Checole of the Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia shares his experience in *Natural Connections.* "For a long time persistent dissension and infighting over administrative issues and minor doctrinal questions hampered church growth and evangelism. However, this was resolved when the church buildings were closed down and all institutions confiscated in 1982. It was a big relief to the church and a chance to fully concentrate on evangelism. Another practical problem that had restricted church growth and evangelism for many years was our forced confinement to two difficult areas for evangelistic work in the eastern part of Ethiopia. But after 1982 MKC believers were scattered over the entire country and were therefore able to perform their Christian duty of spreading the Good News 'to the uttermost parts of Ethiopia.'" *Natural Connections* is a study book published by Mennonite Central Committee.

MCC team plans aid to Rwanda's refugees

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee is planning one of its biggest food shipments ever, to Goma, Zaire, and is seeking short-term, French-speaking volunteers to work among the refugees camped there.

These actions are based on recommendations submitted by an MCC assessment team Aug. 1. The team—Tim Lind, William Reimer, Cathy Hodder and Terry Sawatsky—spent the past two weeks traveling in eastern Zaire, Burundi and Rwanda.

Lind says Goma, where more than 1 million refugees are camped in "inhuman" conditions, defies description. Rather than dwell on the ghastliness, he says, "now that we know, we are responsible to act."

Previous to the team's report, MCC had contributed $50,000 U.S./$69,400 Cdn. to help finance an airlift of unimix, a high-protein food mixture, and blankets from Nairobi, Kenya, to Goma, Zaire, at the end of July via Lutheran World Federation planes. Local churches were to distribute the supplies.

MCC helped purchase some 10 tons of Ugandan cool climate, drought-resistant sorghum seeds, valued at $3,000 U.S./$4,170 Cdn., for Rwandan farmers. Due to hardships created by the civil war, many Rwandans consumed their seeds; others lost their seeds when fighting forced them from their homes. MCC also helped send a shipment of 1,000 tons of beans toward replenishing supplies along the Tanzanian border. The food will go to Tanzanians who earlier shared with Rwandan refugees.

Now MCC, through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, is arranging to send thousands of tons of lentils and oil to Goma as quickly as possible. At the end of July many refugees still had received no food. About 300 tons of food were arriving in Goma daily; some 600 tons daily were needed.

MCC is also recruiting three to five people, preferably French-speaking, to go to Goma to help distribute food,

Mediator to start refugee counseling efforts

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee is sending mediator Barry Hart to Benaco refugee camp in Tanzania for two weeks to help establish counseling programs for traumatized Rwandans.

Benaco Camp houses more than 300,000 Rwandans who fled their homeland at the end of April. Children there have seen their families massacred; parents have lost children.

Hart, who previously served with MCC and Mennonite Board of Missions in Liberia, was to leave for the camp on Aug. 10. There he will work with the Christian Council of Tanzania's refugee and relief office to identify and cooperate with Rwandan social workers, pastors and community leaders who have counseling experience.

Hart expects it to be difficult. "These leaders may themselves be overwhelmed. We will try to help them work through their own trauma, which may free them to help others," he says.

He stresses that he is not going to "prescribe" North American solutions but rather will add ideas to traditional coping concepts.

"Cultural awareness plays an important role," he says. "Traditional understandings of death, mourning and proper burial for the dead might affect how people move through the stages of grief."

Most Rwandans are Christians, and Hart feels that church leaders may be particularly distressed. "The church is really suffering. Leaders feel they have failed. We'll try to encourage churches to build on the gospel of peace and love they have already preached," he says.

MCC plans to send additional counselors to Tanzania in August and September. Hart will lay the groundwork for these visits. *Pearl Sensenig* provide medical care, befriend refugees and perform other duties. Zairian Mennonites are also hoping to volunteer.

Food distribution in Goma is still chaotic, says Lind. At one distribution center, he said, the hillside was "a solid mass of people, shoulder-to-shoulder."

Unfathomable: "The size of Goma is difficult to fathom," he says. "People are camped for kilometers. Those on the outskirts must walk more than 20 kilometers [12.4 miles] to get food, water or health care. Some die on the way."

MCC is also assisting Zairian church efforts to aid some of the 300,000 Rwandan refugees in Bukavu. Cathy Hodder, who is now in Kenya, will return to Bukavu on Aug. 3 to deliver an initial MCC grant of $35,000 U.S./ $48,611 Cdn. MCC will likely provide several hundred thousand additional dollars to this effort.

Zairian churches in Bukavu reported that refugee children also need warm clothing. People wishing to donate sweaters and other children's clothing should contact their nearest MCC office. MCC suggests that people who donate garments also contribute about

Not safe yet: *Rwandans arrive at Benaco refugee camp in Ngara district, Tanzania. Over 300,000 Rwandans are camping here. Thousands more arrive daily. The water supply is insufficient and the threat of epidemic real.*

Don Edkins (WCC/MCC)

Inside the news

Alternative justice booming in New Zealand / p. 16

Colombian Mennonites live amid violence / p. 18

The secret negotiations that led to last September's Israeli/Palestine Liberation Organization agreement took place in a country mansion south of Oslo, Norway. The hosts were two married couples. A 4-year-old child played with his toys at the feet of the negotiators. The Israelis and Palestinians, who are fond of children, gradually relaxed. They told jokes, and soon everyone was laughing. The home-cooked meals and leisurely walks in the woods added to the atmosphere. "And so it was that the Norwegians provided hearth and heart to the seemingly intractable Israeli/PLO stalemate," says the *United States Institute of Peace Journal.* (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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Restorative justice is not a new idea. Drawing upon the Hebraic concept of restorative justice in the Bible, Mennonite Central Committee staffer Howard Zehr outlines these features of restorative justice:

- Crime is not seen to violate the state and its laws but rather people and relationships.
- Justice does not focus on establishing guilt but aims to identify needs and obligations.
- Restoration and reconciliation, rather than retaliatory punishment, is the goal.
- Justice is established through dialogue and mutual agreement rather than adversarial conflict.
- The process gives both victims and offenders—not just offenders—a central role.
- The outcome is not judged by who wins and who loses but by the degree of responsibilities assumed, needs met and healing attained.

Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

So Khat, a 72-year-old farmer, and Mike Roberts, a Mennonite Central Committee hydrologist, peddle a water wheel together in Prey Veng, Cambodia, as they calculate how much water is being pumped into a nearby field. Cambodians are often reluctant to work together on irrigation and other projects. The Khmer Rouge, which ruled Cambodia in the 1970s, forced people to dig canals, build roads and labor on other projects to fulfill the government's dream of turning Cambodia into a peasant collective. Some 1 million Cambodians died of executions in that 3 1/2-year period. "We are always careful to stress that participation in MCC-initiated projects is voluntary," Roberts says.

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Exxon Corporation has agreed to pay $20 million U.S. to compensate 3,500 Alaska Natives for the seals, fish, kelp and other traditional food they can't eat because of the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound in 1989. The settlement came July 25 as a federal jury awarded over $900 million in compensatory damages for 10,000 fishermen who claim the spill also ruined their livelihood. (*The Christian Science Monitor*)

$2 U.S. per pound or $6 Cdn. per kilogram of clothing to help pay shipping costs.

Currently church compounds in Bukavu are swamped with refugees and people fear cholera may strike here, as it has in Goma. A refugee committee set up by Zairian Protestant churches has decided to resettle about 5,000 Rwandans in sites 6 to 19 miles (10 to 30 kilometers) from the border. Churches in these areas have agreed to host the refugees; each site will have about 500 refugees. The refugees will likely stay in school buildings until classes begin in September. Meanwhile local communities will help them erect semi-permanent shelters and allot some land for gardens. MCC grants will help pay for transportation, food, housing materials and other expenses.

"I was overwhelmed by sadness at what I saw in Goma. I'm so glad that at least 5,000 refugees in Bukavu won't have to live like that," says Hodder.

The MCC assessment team says Rwandan refugees in Zaire are unlikely to return home soon. "Both sides—Hutus and Tutsis—have been involved in such horrendous acts of violence. Rwandan church leaders said political tensions are so great that until some of the problems are solved they will not encourage people to go back," says Reimer.

In fact, the team saw signs that more Rwandans may pour into Zaire. Sawatsky traveled into an area of Rwanda protected by French soldiers who are scheduled to leave. People told Sawatsky they would cross the border when the French left.

The team also visited Burundi, Rwanda's neighbor to the south. "We heard from people there that the situation in Burundi is only a step away from Rwanda," said Lind.

In Burundi, a country that has experienced tensions similar to Rwanda's over the past years, MCC plans to help fund a program that trains young people, both Hutu and Tutsi, in construction and reconciliation. The volunteers then go into rural villages to rebuild homes destroyed by ethnic fighting, and to teach reconciliation through their example and their involvement.

Send donations to MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, or to MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.

Alternative justice booming in New Zealand

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—A youth charged with supermarket burglary was confronted by the store manager, who suggested he work unpaid at the supermarket. If he completed the hours successfully, he would be offered a part-time job there.

To protect the offender's dignity, the manager required him to go through the normal hiring process. He was then employed by the store; only he and manager knew the true situation. He eventually obtained a paid position at the supermarket.

Such an outcome for a juvenile crime seems almost unheard of today. Yet this and similar outcomes are being achieved in New Zealand. This South Pacific country of 3.5 million people and 50 million sheep boasts the only institutionalized, mandatory restorative justice program—used for 14-, 15- and 16-year-old offenders only—of the Western world's legal systems.

Innovative legislation: The program—adopted in 1989 under a "Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act"—was prompted by New Zealand's indigenous Maori population. The Maori, who constitute 15 percent of New Zealand's population, urged a return to their traditional justice system, in which the offender's extended family and community, along with the victim, use consensus decision making to hold the offender accountable and to make amends.

New Zealand's legislation created "family conference groups" in which offender, family, community and victim meet to arrive at a negotiated response.

Power to the people: "In the process most power previously vested in the court is transferred to the local community," says Judge Fred McElrea of the Auckland Youth Court.

In family group conferences a Youth Justice Coordinator convenes and mediates the conference. It can include 30 or more people and is often held in the youth's community. Attenders include the offender, members of the offender's extended family, the victim and anyone the victim wishes to be present, a youth advocate, a police officer (who serves as prosecutor), sometimes a social worker, and possibly community representatives, such as a pastor, representative of a drug addiction agency, teacher or coach.

This group meets to agree upon an outcome, which may include prison time, restitution (service, payment, apology) to the victim, school or remedial work, treatment for addictions, curfew, prohibition to associate with co-offenders and community service. If the group cannot agree, which occurs just 10 to 20 percent of the time, the case goes to court, where a judge reviews the decision.

Does it work? One study found that 91 percent of the police involved were satisfied with family group conference outcomes, as were 86 percent of the youth justice coordinators, 85 percent of the parents and 84 percent of the young people. Only 53 percent of the victims who attended were satisfied, however. Since this research, family group conference practitioners have paid greater attention to victims' expectations and needs.

The work and writings of Howard Zehr, director of Mennonite Central Committee's U.S. Office of Criminal Justice, have since been important to various New Zealanders implementing the legislation. A review of Zehr's *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice* in a New Zealand Christian journal prompted the editors of the journal to invite Zehr to New Zealand.

From June 5 to 30, the journal sponsored Zehr on a speaking tour through the country's two main islands. Zehr spoke with classes, professional groups and the public and had 18 media interviews.

Tough on crime: Next to the United States, New Zealand has the world's second highest adult incarceration rates. It is also experiencing a similar get-tough-on-crime stage. Those who have seen the juvenile system's benefits and want to see it extended to adult offenders do not always get a receptive ear.

Zehr's visit helped bolster the case for restorative justice. Judge McElrea, an ardent advocate of restorative justice, says, "In one way or another I have been a student and practitioner of the law for 33 years; yet I now realize that until I read Zehr's work nine months ago, I had never fully understood the foundations of our criminal law."

As an outside expert, Zehr was able to lend credibility and support to McElrea's efforts. Zehr spoke to and received warm receptions from the Auckland Criminal Bar Association and the New Zealand Justice Department, groups with little or no interest in the issue until Zehr's visit.

The trip has prompted Zehr to begin examining ways to incorporate family members and the offender's community in the victim-offender reconciliation program he helped pioneer in North America. VORP uses a mediator to bring victim and offender face to face to talk about what happened and to

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Advocate: *Judge Fred McElrea of the Auckland Youth Court, an ardent advocate of restorative justice, is working to extend New Zealand's program for teenage offenders to include adults.*

Cedar Falls Mennonite Church, formerly in Waterloo, Iowa, has moved to Cedar Falls. The church is taking over an old church building that can seat 500. The Trinity United Methodist congregation sold the building to the Mennonites, and some of the Methodists are staying and exploring joining the Mennonite church. The Cedar Falls Church, a group of about 30, began meeting in the Cedar Falls-Waterloo area in the early 1980s.

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Area youth ministers from the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church have embraced the "True Love Waits" campaign for sexual abstinence among teenagers. Among Mennonites, the campaign will be held in conjunction with the Wichita '95 Youth Convention. By early fall a kit will go to each church. The kit will include Bible study outlines, worship service outlines and press articles about the campaign. Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries will coordinate the campaign. For more information contact Abe Bergen, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

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For the first time a news wire service (Associated Press) included Mennonite Central Committee in its relief agency listing. Newspapers throughout North America printed this list alongside articles about Rwanda. As a result MCC received an average of 12 calls hourly several days in a row. Most people phoned to ask what MCC was doing and how they could donate money. One man said Mennonite Disaster Service had assisted him and now he wanted to work with Mennonites to help others. Some callers wanted to go to Goma, Zaire. Doctors, nurses and others called to say they wanted to spend their upcoming vacations in the refugee camps. Others asked about adopting Rwandan orphans. Many also wanted to talk about their feelings of horror at the pictures of suffering they were seeing in the media.

"Shaping Sexual Character" is the focus of the 1994 Church Leaders Conference Oct. 17-18 at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Marva J. Dawn, author of *Sexual Character: Beyond Technique to Intimacy*, will be the keynote speaker. Sessions will be led by Ted J. Koontz, Ken Hawkley, Marvin Zehr and Rosie Epp. Contact Randy Keeler, Bluffton College campus pastor, at (419) 358-3219.

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On Sept. 11, churches across the United States will honor public and private school teachers, administrators and support staff. "Educators Sunday," an event launched by Christian Educators Association International, aims to restore the supportive relationship between public educators and the evangelical community. CEAI provides a variety of resources for the Sunday. Contact CEAI at (818) 798-1124.

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Representatives of two groups coordinating Mennonite higher education met together June 10-11 for the second year in a row. Twenty-six people from the Mennonite Church's Board of Education and the General Conference Mennonite Church's Higher Education Council met at Cabrini Retreat Center in Des Plaines, Ill. HEC chair James Schrag offered closing remarks noting the differences between the two groups. "The Higher Education Council, still in its youth, deals with questions of identity, of vision and mission and relationships. The Mennonite Board of Education, with its lengthy history, can draw upon extensive resources and experience." He concluded, "I hope we continue to discover ways God has blessed us both in our various stages of development and that these might be mutually beneficial."

work out a settlement.

"VORP is a very individualized process, involving only offender, victim and mediator," Zehr says. "Seeing New Zealand's model, I now understand the importance of including family and community." *Emily Will*

Colombian Mennos know violence

Santafe de Bogota (GCMC)—Most Colombians don't die of natural causes. According to a recent newspaper article published here, the number one cause of death is homicide with a firearm. In 1992 alone, over 27,000 homicides occurred in this country with a population of about 34 million.

It is statistics like these that make Colombia the most violent country in the world, excluding those in a state of war. And it is statistics like these that cause Peter Stucky, executive secretary of the Colombian Mennonite Church and a Colombian citizen, to say that "every day you live in Colombia is by the grace of God." Stucky will become the pastor of the Teusaquillo Mennonite Church in Santafe de Bogota next January.

In 1992 alone, over 27,000 homicides occurred in this country with a population of about 34 million.

Like so many people here, Stucky and other Mennonites have felt the impact of this violent culture. Almost everyone this reporter interviewed had witnessed or experienced some act of brutality.

Vidal Jimenez is one such example. A coffee and fruit farmer in Cachipay, Jimenez had his first taste of violence when he was 10 years old. It was at that age, he said in an interview in his home, that his family was forced to flee their home because their lives were in danger.

The year was 1955, when fierce fighting occurred between liberals and conservatives and other splinter groups. In a period known as La Violencia, an estimated 200,000 Colombians were killed when the fighting was at its worst, from 1948 through 1953. The fighting was also divided along religious lines, since Catholics tended to be conservatives, Protestants liberals.

"Some members of a family that was conservative came looking for my father because they wanted to kill him. He was in hiding," recalled Jimenez. "We had to leave everything behind. We came to Cachipay with nothing. Later we found out that our Protestant pastor had been killed."

Today the area where Jimenez's family once lived is heavily infested with guerrillas. While Jimenez still has relatives there, he has not visited them for three years. There has been no communication, he said, even though the area is only three hours from Cachipay.

Guerrillas also circulate in the Cachipay area. Three years ago a guerrilla asked Jimenez for the equivalent of about $100. Dressed in blue jeans and unarmed, the guerrilla said he needed the money because some of the guerrillas were sick. Jimenez, who had been singled out because he was a member of the Mennonite church, said he could only afford to give about $25. They finally agreed on $40. "We were both a bit afraid. He was just a kid," said Jimenez. "He told me not to tell anyone about our meeting."

Mennonite organizations are not immune. In 1991 MENCOLDES, the Mennonite Foundation for Social Development, was robbed by men carrying submachine guns and grenades.

An alternative: It is precisely because violence is such a way of life in Colombia, or, as Stucky said, "a real temptation," that Mennonites here felt they needed to provide an alternative.

"Most people, especially the poor, are suspected by the government. The violence, the history of Colombia carries you forward. You have to respond. This church has been formed in faith," said Stucky, noting that the Colombian Mennonite Church, which has 784 members in 14 congregations, has focused on peace issues with greater intensity in the last five years.

The concern of church members and leaders resulted in the birth of two organizations during the late 1980s to early 1990s. The first to be established was the Coalition for Conscientious Objection, a broad-based group that is working for legal recognition of conscientious objectors and raising public

> **"The violence, the history of Colombia carries you forward."**
>
> ***Stucky***

awareness about the issue.

The Colombian Mennonite Church was partly pushed to be more proactive on conscientious objection because the military started using computers to track the names of people who did not comply with their rules, said Stucky, observing that previously the military system for finding conscientious objectors was "pretty haphazard." On a personal note, he said, he was motivated by the fact that he has three sons whom he does not want to serve in the military.

Fortunately, he said, a new law, passed in 1993, allows students who are enrolled in seminary classes to postpone their obligatory military service. Typically the students are not called back into the armed forces once they are finished with their coursework. For the first time, the Mennonite seminary started offering a year-long class for COs this spring in order to take advantage of this loophole in the Colombian law. The class looks at issues related to peace, justice, human rights and the environment within a Christian and Anabaptist framework.

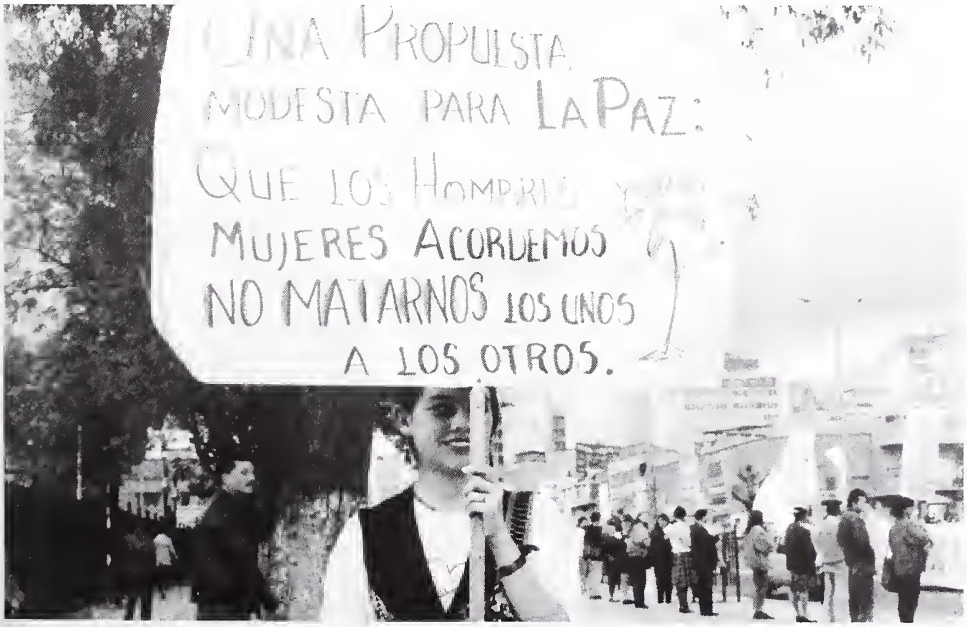
JustaPaz (Justice and Peace) is the second organization the Colombian Mennonite Church started. It focuses on helping the evangelical and specifically the Mennonite churches in the areas of conciliation, mediation, peace education and human rights.

About 50 percent of Colombian Mennonites have participated in the JustaPaz mediation workshops, which look at conflict at all levels — personal, congregational, national. Recently JustaPaz started a conflict resolution program for students at the two Mennonite schools. Several public schools have since expressed interest in this program.

While there are many "powerful interests" in Colombia that want to perpetuate the violence, Stucky said that "there is an atmosphere in the country as a whole where people and organizations are looking for alternatives to solving conflicts."

Even the Colombian government appears to be more receptive, he said, noting that a new ruling mandates that civil cases be handled through a conciliation program. Since the government has little training in this field, it has asked JustaPaz for help. As a result, about six government lawyers joined about 40 other Colombians, many of them Mennonites, in a JustaPaz mediation seminar led by John Paul Lederach this spring. The lawyers represented the justice, defense and ombudsman offices.

"The response has been amazing. It is outside our hands. It is either an idea whose time has come or the way of the Lord," said Stucky. *Carla Reimer*



Miguel Angel Pinzon

Voices for peace: *A Mennonite woman joins other Mennonites to protest outside a military recruitment center in Santafe de Bogota. Her sign says, "A Modest Proposal for Peace, that men and women agree not to kill each other."*

Speakers for the Wichita '95 Youth Convention have been confirmed. They are Hubert Brown, dean of students at Hesston (Kan.) College; Ruth Boehm, youth pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg; Mike Yaconelli, co-founder of Youth Specialties; Mark Vincent, youth minister for Indiana-Michigan Conference; June Alliman Yoder, professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary; Noel Santiago, Mennonite Board of Missions' consultant for church planting and growth; and author Tony Campolo.

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Bluffton (Ohio) College is holding its Institute for Learning in Retirement this fall. Nine study sessions will be offered to retired or semiretired residents of the Bluffton area. Sessions run Sept. 26-Nov. 17. "Peer-learning" seminars consist of small groups of people learning from each other about areas of common interest. A moderator organizes the classes. Contact Nancy Schweingruber, Box 1117, Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817, (419) 358-3346.

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Northdale Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, has voted to merge with a Mennonite Brethren congregation, Valley Gardens Community Church. The new body will be dual-conference. The two churches voted for merger earlier this spring. The merger needs to be approved by the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba and the Manitoba Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches at their February conventions. It will be the first dual-affiliated church for either group in the province. Valley Gardens' moderator says the reason for merger was simple: "They had a building and few people, we had people but no building. It seemed to be good stewardship to join together to meet both our needs."

Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

Ron Guengerich will teach a course, "Prophecy in Israel," focusing on the role of prophecy and how to study the Bible, this fall through Great Plains Seminary, 2500 Place, 2517 Main, North Newton, Kan. The course begins Sept. 6, 7-9:30 p.m., and continues each Tuesday until Dec. 6. Registration is at the first session. For more information, contact Jacob T. Friesen at (316) 283-6300.

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The United States' Nuclear Regulatory Commission has routinely blown the cover of whistle-blowers who revealed safety problems at nuclear plants. An investigation by the NRC's inspector general has shown that NRC officials were turning over whistle-blowers' identities to one of the nation's largest utilities, the Tennessee Valley Authority. The regulators violated federal policy protecting whistle-blowers, who supply vital information about safety risks at nuclear power stations across the United States. (*The Christian Science Monitor*)

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U.S. Park Police arrested Christian Peacemaker Corps member Cole Arendt July 29 for refusing to leave the White House sidewalk at a demonstration calling for alternatives to military intervention in Haiti and a peaceful return of Haitian exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Arendt is interim director of Voices for Haiti: Campaign for a Just U.S. Policy. The campaign sponsored nonviolent protests July 29 following a day of meeting with Congress and administration officials to voice their concerns for Haiti. The events marked the anniversary week of the 1915 invasion of Haiti by U.S. President Woodrow Wilson. Four Christian Peacemaker Teams members remain in Jeremie, Haiti.

MINISTERS

David Breen resigned June 30 as associate pastor at Peace Church, Richmond, B.C.

Grace and **Paul Brunner** will be interim pastors at Trinity Church, Hillsboro, Kan., for one to two years beginning in October.

Omar Cortes is co-pastor at First United Mennonite Spanish Church in Vancouver.

Tammy Duvanel Unruh will end her term as youth pastor at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan., Aug. 31.

Doug and **Sandy Epp** will be church planters for the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia in the Sardis-Promontory area.

Bernice Kaufman has served as summer assistant pastor for Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Ingrid Loepp Thiessen was ordained June 5 at Steinmann Church, Baden, Ont.

Laura Loewen was ordained June 12 at the Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal.

Brad Swanson is minister of music and education at Cornerstone Church, Saskatoon.

Don Unger is pastor of Hoffnungsfelder churches in Glenbush, Mayfair and Rabbit Lake, Sask.

WORKERS

Kathleen Aufderhaar has joined the library staff at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Nan Goering Bergen, Moundridge, Kan., began Aug. 15 as secretary for the Jubilee Project Office for the Commission on Education.

Kim Boettger, Erb St. Church, Waterloo, Ont., began a four-month MCC term in Akron, Pa., as a clerk at Self-Help Crafts of the World store.

Christopher Bowers, Silverwood Church, Goshen, Ind., began a one-year MCC term in March in Akron, Pa., as a bookkeeper and accountant.

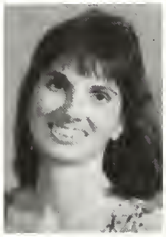
Lydia Braun, Sterling Fellowship, Winnipeg, is beginning an 18-month term with MCC Canada in Winnipeg as a program assistant.

Jennifer Thiessen Clare and **Terry Clare**, Waterloo-Kitchener (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, began two-year MCC terms in May as Serving And Learning Together (SALT) unit leaders in Kitchener-Waterloo.

Anita and **Tim Eisenbeis**, Michigan State University Fellowship and Salem-Zion

J. Clare

T. Clare


A. Eisenbeis

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Guenther

L. Jones

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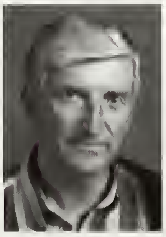
E. Peters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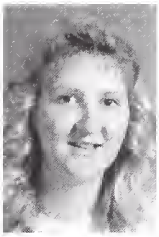
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Church, Freeman, S.D., are beginning three-year MCC terms in Gravat, Pernambuco, Brazil. Anita will work as a physical therapist and Tim with agricultural extension and community development.

Steven Guenther, Osler (Sask.) Church, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Burkina Faso as a community development and water resources worker.

Larry and **Melanie Jones**, West Philadelphia Fellowship, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Belo Jardim, Brazil. Larry will be working as a job creation coordinator and Melanie in social services.

David Mead has been named assistant professor of accounting at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Edna and **John Peters**, Peace Church, Saskatoon, are beginning four-year MCC terms in Bolivia as social service administrators with Centro Menno. Edna will work in health and John in agriculture.

Jeff Reimer, Meadows (Ill.) Church and First Church, Urbana, Ill., is beginning a three-year MCC term in Maijdi, Bangladesh, as an economist.

Erwin and **Angela Rempel**, First Church, Newton, Kan., are beginning a three-year term in Gaborone, Botswana, working as country co-directors for Mennonite Ministries of Botswana. They are sponsored by the Commission on Overseas Mission, Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and MCC.

Suzanne Ryan is assistant director of development and director of the annual fund at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Florence Scheerer, Wilmot Church, New Hamburg, Ont., began a two-year MCC term in March in New Hamburg, working in management of a thrift shop.

Eric Sider, Listowel (Ont.) Church, is beginning an 18-month MCC term in New Hamburg, Ont., working with inventory and as a receiver for Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Eileen Steinmann, Crosshill Church, Millbank, Ont., began a two-year MCC term in February in New Hamburg, Ont., as secretary and receptionist.

Alma Kaufman Unrau, Goessel, Kan., began Aug. 15 as editorial assistant at Faith & Life Press.

Lisa Wagler, East Zorra Church, Tavistock, Ont., began a two-year MCC term in May in Lancaster, Pa., as a consumer credit counselor.

Cindy Wiebe, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, is beginning a two-year MCC term in New Orleans as a nurse at St. Thomas Health Center.

Barbara Wolfe, Pleasant Hill Church, Saskatoon, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Akron, Pa., as a consignment and photography assistant with Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center is sponsoring a mediation workshop Nov. 14-18 in Elkhart, Ind. The workshop is designed to give church leaders skills to deal with group conflict. Contact the center at 528 E. Madison, Lombard, IL 60148-3599, (708) 627-9893.

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Position wanted: Mature, approachable and creative individual, who is committed to the Anabaptist-Mennonite expression of Christian faith, with gifts in teaching, preaching, worship leadership and writing, seeks opportunity to connect with interested congregation, teaching institution or conference body to fill or create position (of at least 2/3 time) as **teaching minister, associate/assistant minister** (dedicated to above gifts), **Bible instructor, coordinator of distance education or related.**

Please phone or write to request résumé (preferably **by Aug. 31**) to **Gary F. Daught** (B.S., M.Div., Th.M.), **Box 33, Mather, MB R0K 1L0 Canada, (204) 529-2023.**

Associate director of development and church relations. 12-month, full-time position, beginning immediately. The qualified candidate will possess a bachelor's degree. A master's degree is preferred. The primary responsibility is to generate resources for EMC&S through donor contacts in specific assigned regions. A familiarity with academic community; experience in business, finance or sales is helpful. Assignment includes securing funds for undergraduate, seminary and other graduate programs, cultivating church and constituency advocacy, assisting in stewardship and estate planning. Position requires travel and irregular evening and weekend hours. Minorities especially encouraged to apply.

If interested, please contact **Eastern Mennonite College & Seminary Human Resources Office, (703) 432-4108, by Sept. 5.**

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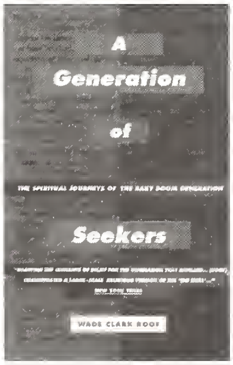
BOOKS

Boomer spirit

A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation *by Wade Clark Roof (HarperSanFrancisco, 1993, 294 pages)*

Reviewed by Ken Hawkley, Newton, Kan.

There are many books about Baby Boomers describing their wants, needs, gripes, issues, average shoe size. … Why another book about Baby Boomers? Is this one more self-indulgent book for the generation that likes hearing about itself?



This book is truly different. Wade Clark Roof and his team worked at something deeper than social trends, more basic than public opinions. This book lives up to its subtitle in exploring "the spiritual journeys of the baby boom generation."

The book is also important because it affords a look behind the scenes for the generation that is getting a second chance to change the world, with more Baby Boomers taking high public offices and running large corporations.

Roof centers the book around relevant themes. First there is the pivotal point of people's involvement in the '60s. For many polled in this study, those were formative years, a time when Boomers were teenagers. Roof looks at Boomers as being on a journey. Journey language is strong in Boomer language, and this book reveals the paradigm that journey language shapes for Boomers.

The other important theme is the assumption of choice. Roof assumes that Boomers have choice in what they do, what they believe and how they act. That is one drawback to the book. The assumption of choice indicates that this is a book chiefly about white, middle-class Boomers. Other population groups and economic classes tend not to revere freedom of choice as middle-class Boomers do, either because they take it for granted or consider choice out of reach. Still, this book has much to offer in looking into the psyche and soul of a generation still clamoring to find itself.

There are opinion polls and trends cited in this book, but clearly the heart of the work is the spiritual journeys portrayed. These are important because they cut to something that drives this generation, "because there is widespread ferment that reaches deep within their lives."

Several people from varying walks of life give us pieces of their spiritual journey. Roof and others spent time interviewing these people in-depth about how they felt and why. All of the other survey-type data is interwoven with these stories.

Roof introduces such characters as Mollie Stone, an active spiritual seeker who does not want to be tied to one religion but prefers an eclectic approach to spirituality. Juxtaposed with Mollie is Linda Kramer, a born-again Christian planted in the more orthodox definiteness of evangelical Christianity. The reader is given a chance to understand both of these people, searching for some of the same things from different directions.

It is the stories, the insights, the hopes and fears of these people that bring the book "home." This is not a book about all those Boomers out there; I found that it was a book about me. It was one of those rare cathartic experiences, to read my own story in the stories of others.

If you want to understand the ethos and spiritual struggles of the Boomers, this is the book. If you are a Boomer and want to understand yourself better, this is the book. I recommend this book as one that will make a difference in your life.

Evangelism you can handle

50 Ways You Can Reach the World *by Tony Campolo and Gordon Aeschliman (InterVarsity, 1993, 144 pages)*

Reviewed by Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, Fresno, Calif.

The 50 Ways series of books continues with this look at personal evangelism, if "evangelism" is the right word for it. This is a type of evangelism that most Mennonites will be able to handle. As I read the book I kept saying things like "been there, done that, doing that tomorrow. … "

Campolo and Aeschliman have made worthwhile activities seem easy, attractive and meaningful in this short book. They begin with a list of reasons

Voyage, travel and change of place impart new vigor to the mind.

(Lucius Annaens Seneca, 4 B.C. – 65 A.D.) – a Roman philosopher

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for being committed to evangelism: It is a mooring point in an increasingly relative world, it gives us a personal focus that transcends discouragement, and it keeps us honest in our discipleship. Amen. Our culture praises far different values.

The beauty of the books in this series is that they state the obvious. We all can lose sight of the basic things an individual can do. It is tempting to make plans for bringing the whole world to Christ as an excuse for not actually doing anything. This book sounds like a running-shoe commercial—"just do it."

For those looking for a way to get moving in a life of discipleship, this book could be just the thing. For those who are burdened with great, far-reaching plans this book can be a good reminder to do the small-yet-meaningful things that lie along the way. Sunday school classes and small groups will find a good bit of grist for their discussions here.

The church and the law

Accountable Leadership: Resources for Worshipping Communities *by Paul Chaffee (Church Care Publishing, 1993, 251 pages)*

Reviewed by Donald E. Yoder, Tempe, Ariz.

Paul Chaffee is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. Along with his parish ministry, *Accountable Leadership* was inspired by eight years of research and writing for the property and casualty insurance program of the UCC. The book covers the legal, financial and ethical issues arising out of congregational life. It is a useful resource for all communities of faith.

Part One, "Becoming an Accountable Leader," addresses the responsibilities of leadership, legal requirements and the role of the governing board. Part Two gives extensive and practical help in conducting a congregation's business. Part Three addresses the problem of abuse and abused people in the congregation. One chapter in this section speaks to clergy misconduct. The final chapter gives suggestions and practical information for breaking the cycle of violence.

Every pastor and church board should read and study this book. It should be in the library of every worshiping community. The material is applicable to issues found in the life and ministry of all congregations.

The legal responsibilities of officers and staff of religious organizations have become significantly more complicated in the last 20 years. Along with legislation that bears upon the congregation, the threat of litigation has grown. Leaders need to know why and how to respond. The book also lists practical information, including a reference to a wealth of resource material and organizations.

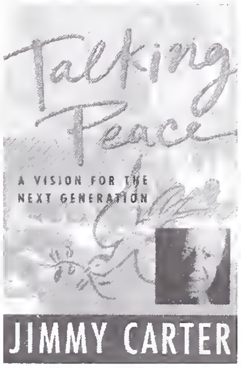
The publisher gives special photocopying permission for material in the book to make it more useful in the congregation.

Carter talks peace to youth

Talking Peace: A Vision for the Next Generation *by Jimmy Carter (Dutton Children's Books, 1993, 177 pages)*

Reviewed by Katy June-Friesen, age 14, Newton, Kan.

Let's just say that it wasn't the type of summer reading I was looking forward to. However, I ended up getting a lot out of the book. The author and former president, Jimmy Carter, ties his experience and knowledge into a message for us young people.



The description of all the conflicts and wars in the world today is eye-opening and helpful. A whole section of the book is devoted to the explanation of the some 34 armed conflicts under way in the world as of 1993. I am much more aware of world events after reading this book.

This would be an excellent book for students to read for a social studies or history class. Included in the book are pictures of Carter's work and letters from various figures. The fact that it did read a little like a textbook made the book less appealing to me, although I should have expected it wouldn't read like a novel.

The book touches on subjects such as mediation, human rights and protecting our environment, and it tells how these things make peace possible. Carter also suggests ways young people can make peace by furthering the cause of these subjects. He ties the conflicts around the world to the lives of American kids. He explains how we can learn from mistakes and try to make peace in our communities.

He does not speak without experience. Throughout his book he details the mediation he did as president, such as the talks between Israel and Egypt at Camp David. He also describes what brought him to start his own organization for human rights and peace, The Carter Center, and the things the center has worked for around the world. These include setting up democratic elections for countries in conflict, mediation between countries and religious and political groups, and work to further human rights.

This book was inspiring to me as far as furthering peace and human rights. I have to say, though, that as far as the message of the book, nothing was totally new or shocking to me.

I found myself agreeing with most everything Carter said, and I have to credit that to being brought up to believe strongly in these values, both in my home and in the Mennonite church. This makes me wonder how someone who has been brought up differently might react to this book. That is why I think this would be a great book for teachers to assign; it would probably make some people think more about how essential peace is. It could also make good discussion for Sunday school classes.

I recommend this book to those interested in the situations of conflict around the world today, and how they too can promote peace in their communities. Even though Carter's book is written for young people, I think adults could get a lot out of it.

Urgently needed—French-speaking volunteers with relational and organizational skills to spend three months in eastern Zaire working among Rwandan refugees. A Zairian church group in Bukavu, Zaire, is asking Mennonite Central Committee to help them organize and run a Rwandan refugee camp. The camp, established by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, houses some 40,000 refugees. Applicants for this demanding assignment should be supported spiritually and financially by their sending congregations. MCC qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. For more information, contact **MCC Personnel Services at (717) 859-1151; in Canada phone (204) 261-6381.**

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Editorial

There's nothing like a good fight

How many of us believe that conflict has no place in the church? Do we believe that as God's body on earth, the church is to be unblemished by anger and dissension?

The first words of our proposed new conference vision statement call us to be menders of conflict, to let "...God's healing and hope flow through us to the world." The proposed new Confession of Faith says that it is the calling of human beings to live in peace with each other. It says that because of sin we have "disrupted the order in the world around us." It says that through the good news "we are reconciled with God and are brought into the reconciling community of God's people."

We reaffirm our calling to unity whenever we sing

Heart with loving heart united ...
Bless'd be the tie that binds ...
Bind us together ...
Dona nobis pacem ...

The Prince of Peace calls us to reconciliation, but what happens when we do not agree? Guilt sets in. We feel that by disagreeing with each other we are disrupting the community and failing God. Wanting to be peacemakers, we avoid disagreement and deny our feelings.

And so "pseudocommunity" evolves. Richard Blackburn, director of the Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center, uses this term to describe a church afraid to disagree. Members of the pseudocommunity may be civil, even kind, to each other, but beneath the surface sits a hostility no one will face.

As Christians we are called to unity. As humans we cannot escape conflict. Fortunately we have the Bible, a chronicle of people of faith struggling through conflicts with non-Christians, with Christians, with governments and with God.

The Scriptures teach us that conflict, when it is confronted, is good. Conflict stirs our tranquility and points us in the direction of growth. In a 1987 article in Mennonite Conciliation Services' *Conciliation Quarterly*, John Paul Lederach points out that the Chinese symbol for conflict combines two terms: danger and opportunity. Conflict is not a destructive force to flee from but a challenge to rise to. We are called to be peacemakers. But we cannot actively *make* peace when conflict is absent or unvoiced.

"If you want to have less conflict in the church," says Blackburn, "try to have more." His logic goes that the sooner and more thoroughly conflict is dealt with, the less danger it poses to do real damage to fellowship. Also, managing small conflicts successfully prepares us to manage larger problems and gives us a history of success to undergird our relationships.

Why then do we run from conflict? Conflict causes pain. And while it holds the potential for growth, it also holds potential for destruction. Our emotions tangle our thoughts. In anger and confusion we lash out. We have seen conflict hurt and divide us. We have not been able to make peace.

There are good and bad ways to manage conflict. Unfortunately, it often seems the bad ways come to us naturally and the good ways seem elusive.

As Christians we are called to unity. As humans we cannot escape conflict.

But there is a growing body of resources dedicated to helping us learn the good ways. Mennonites across North America are helping build these resources, variously known as mediation skills or conflict resolution studies. Dave Gustafson (see page 7) is just one example.

The skills of mediation are complex, but many center on learning one thing: how to listen. Learning to be comfortable with conflict can help us lower our defenses enough to hear each other.

Real listening is scary. Hearing someone fully may push us to self-examination. It may force us to accept fault and responsibility. It may call us to repentance, conversion.

Sounds religious. *Larry Penner*

Recyclable

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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The plight of children

- An ugly, hostile world (see page 3)
- Life in the parking lot (see page 7)
- 'I've come to give my baby away' (see page 8)

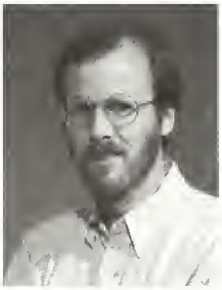
Prologue

Look into the eyes of the Guatemalan boy on the cover or the Brazilian girls on page 4. Then pray for them and for the millions of other children around the world who do not enjoy the basic rights you'll find listed on page 5. Perhaps God will speak to you about getting involved with some children in your community. Or maybe you'll be inspired to love your own children in new ways.

Reading all the statistics about the plight of children can be depressing, but if we can be in touch with specific children, the issue becomes a flesh-and-blood concern. Let people like Iana Gomez (see her story on page 9) or Kristin Neufeld (see the editorial) encourage you in how you relate to the children around you.

Have you had questions about credit cards? Which ones to use? How many to have? Read J.B. Miller's column (page 11) for answers to these and other questions.

School has begun in most places. If there are college students in your congregation who do not receive *The Mennonite*, take advantage of our student plan. Send us the student's name and address, and we'll send the magazine directly to them. We can then bill you or your church, if your church pays for its students' subscriptions. A student subscription only costs $12.50 (U.S.) or $16 (Cdn.). It's a great way to keep students in touch with their church and will give them a nice break from studies. *gh*



Next issue: Ways to support your pastor

Cover: CLEO Freelance Photo

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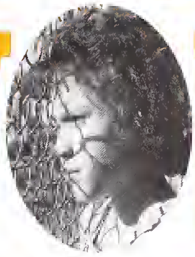
An ugly, hostile world



A wake-up call to the plight of children around the world today

Bryant Myers

More than one-third of the world's population, 1.8 billion people, is under the age of 15. A staggering 85 percent of these children, or 1.5 billion of them, live in the Two-Thirds World.

> *Imagine 80 Boeing 747 airplanes, filled with children, crashing every day with no survivors.*

When we examine the population pyramid for the so-called "developed" and "developing" world, the contrast is stark. In the developed world the bulge, such as it is, represents the 20- to 30-year-olds. In the Two-Thirds World almost half the people are under the age of 19.

This is not our experience in North America or Europe. When we walk down the streets of the United States or Canada, we see roughly equal numbers of children, youth, adults, young and old. If we did the same things in the Two-Thirds World, every other person we would see would be under the age of 19.

When we look at the number of children and youth in the countries of the world as a proportion of their population, Africa stands out since more than 45 percent of its population is under the age of 15. High population growth will add more young people at the same time that their parents increasingly die from AIDS. The Middle East, Mexico and Central America, Bolivia, Pakistan and Afghanistan also stand out.

Many are dying: Every day almost 40,000 children under the age of 5 die. Imagine 80 Boeing 747 airplanes, filled with children, crashing every day with no survivors.

If we look at child mortality rates around the world, we see that children are in greatest danger in Africa, Brazil and the Andean countries of South America, the Middle East, South Asia, Cambodia and Indonesia. Half the world's 36 million refugees and displaced people are children.

Of the 600 million people living in urban slums today, 74 percent are children and young people under the age of 24. Mexico City has a population of more than 17 million and is heading toward 25-plus million early in the 21st century. Some estimate the median age of Mexico City as 14.5.

Many are unwanted: In God's world today, for every five live births

In the Two-Thirds World, girl children consistently get less food, less health care and less education.

An ugly, hostile world

Photo Oikoumene, World Council of Churches

Coming up short: *These girls live on the outskirts of Algagoinhas, Brazil, which has poor education facilities for children and few job possibilities for them afterward.*

there are two induced abortions. In some parts of the world, largely in the West, the number of abortions exceeds 200 per 1,000 live births. Child mortality rates of this level are considered unacceptably high and evidence of Two-Thirds World underdevelopment. Apparently it's all right if children die before they are born.

Another indicator that many children are unwanted is the disturbing problem of street children around the world. Although accurate estimates are hard to come by, some believe that 100 million children—18 percent of all children under the age of 15—live or work on city streets. Latin America has the greatest number of street children; Brazil alone has as many as 7 million.

Many are exploited child laborers: Some estimate that as many as 300 million children under the age of 15 are being exploited in ways we thought had ended in the last century.

Asia has the largest number. In India alone as many as 126 million children are child laborers. In 1992, Peruvian authorities discovered 6,000 children working under slave-like conditions in a jungle gold mine. A report from Thailand revealed that as many as 5 million Thai children between the ages of 5 and 14 are working and are not in school.

"Children are exploitable," Ashok Narayan, former Indian Secretary for Labor, told the *Christian Science Monitor*. "They are more docile. They work fast, and they don't get tired so easily, so more work can be extracted out of them. And even if [the employer] cheats them by paying less wages, they are not in a position to detect it. There are reasons for child labor."

Child labor within a family is largely a product of tradition and necessity. Child labor for an outside employer is the product of being poor. And the price of child labor is high. When children are working, they are not going to school. In addition, child laborers are often treated as expendable parts, easily replaced by the next young child with good eyesight and nimble fingers. Uneducated, sometimes handicapped, these children grow up to be a permanent drain on their economies as adults.

Many are exploited as sex objects: Global figures are impossible to come by, but some estimate that as many as 10 million children could be caught up in the sex industry: child prostitution, sex tourism, pornography. Although most severe in Asia, the problem is known to be widespread elsewhere. It is estimated that there are 500,000 prostitutes under age 20 in Brazil and 150,000 in the United States.

Poverty is the pimp. Of Thailand's estimated one million prostitutes, 80

Numbers of street children

Around the world	
Latin America	40 million
Asia	30 million
Africa	10 million
Philippines	1.2 million

In North America	
Mexico City	200,000
Toronto	12,000
New York	15,000
Los Angeles	15-20,000

percent are under age 16—800,000 little girls. In his book *From Peasant Girls to Bangkok Masseuses* Pasuk Phongpaichit demonstrates with case after case that the decision to become a prostitute was an economic decision. "These women were not fleeing from family background or a rural society which oppresses women in conventional ways. They left to help their families survive."

The worst off are girls: Two-thirds of the estimated 130 million children in the world with no access to primary schools are girls. When we look at survival rates, the girl child comes up significantly short. Other things being equal, girls have a slightly better chance of surviving the early, vulnerable years. But things are not equal. In the Two-Thirds World, girl children consistently get less food, less health care and less education. The actual survival rates in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan reveal that as many as one million fewer girl children survive than do boys. They die because they are female. China's population control policy—allowing only one child per family—has resulted in the deaths of millions of girl babies.

The world's children are growing up in an ugly and hostile world. If they survive, they are being forced to become premature adults. Furthermore, adults are the primary cause of the problem. There's not much good news if you are young.

Because the world's children are in no way to blame for what they have to endure, they represent a mirror to us of the evils the world otherwise tolerates, accepts or excuses.

This article is reprinted from MARC Newsletter, *December 1992.*

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (a summary)

All children have the right to:

1. Love and security
2. Food
3. Survival and development
4. Parental care
5. A decent place to live
6. Health and health services
7. Protection from abuse
8. Education
9. Rest and leisure

Children on the streets

- There are more than 100 million street children around the world who live in fear every day of their lives. According to Amnesty International, many are beaten, illegally jailed, tortured, sexually exploited and systematically killed by agents of the state. (*Omni Magazine*)
- Latin America has only 10 percent of the world's children but more than 40 percent of the world's street children.
- The internal war in Peru has left 1,000 children dead, 3,000 wounded, 50,000 orphaned and 120,000 displaced. Five thousand are child soldiers in the army or in guerrilla forces. The difficult economic situation has sent 1.2 million children into the streets. (*Christian Century*)
- Approximately 25 million children live and work on the streets of Brazil, about 40 percent of Brazil's total child population. (*Child Hope*)
- In Chile, 24,000 children are on the streets, out of 1.2 million who live in poverty. (*Boys and Girls*)
- In Argentina, children ages 8 to 10 are trained in prostitution centers, then sold to the United States and Arab countries. Some 12,000 children leave the country each year to be adopted, but not always through legal means. (*Christian Century*)
- In Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 5,000 children live in the streets, 85 percent not knowing who their father is. (*Church World Service 1991 Global Calendar*)
- The total number of completely abandoned street children was 11 million in 1990. This figure will rise by 40 percent to at least 15 million by the year 2000. (*Caught in Modern Slavery*)
- In Brazil, 400,000 children younger than age 5 die each year from curable illnesses. (*Christian Century*)
- Brazilian newspapers report little about the murders of children. They criminalize the street children as a way of accounting for their deaths. They claim that the children are thieves, delinquents or drug traffickers but do not provide evidence to support their accusations. (*Lives at Risk*)
- The conflict in Guatemala has orphaned or displaced 210,000 children. (*Christian Century*)
- Between 40 and 50 street children were killed in Guatemala by police between January and September 1990. Covenant House has filed 25 lawsuits against policemen, and because of this the staff has been harassed and intimidated by police. (*Christian Science Monitor*)
- In the United States, the population of homeless children is larger than the total number of children in Pittsburgh. (*State of America's Children*)

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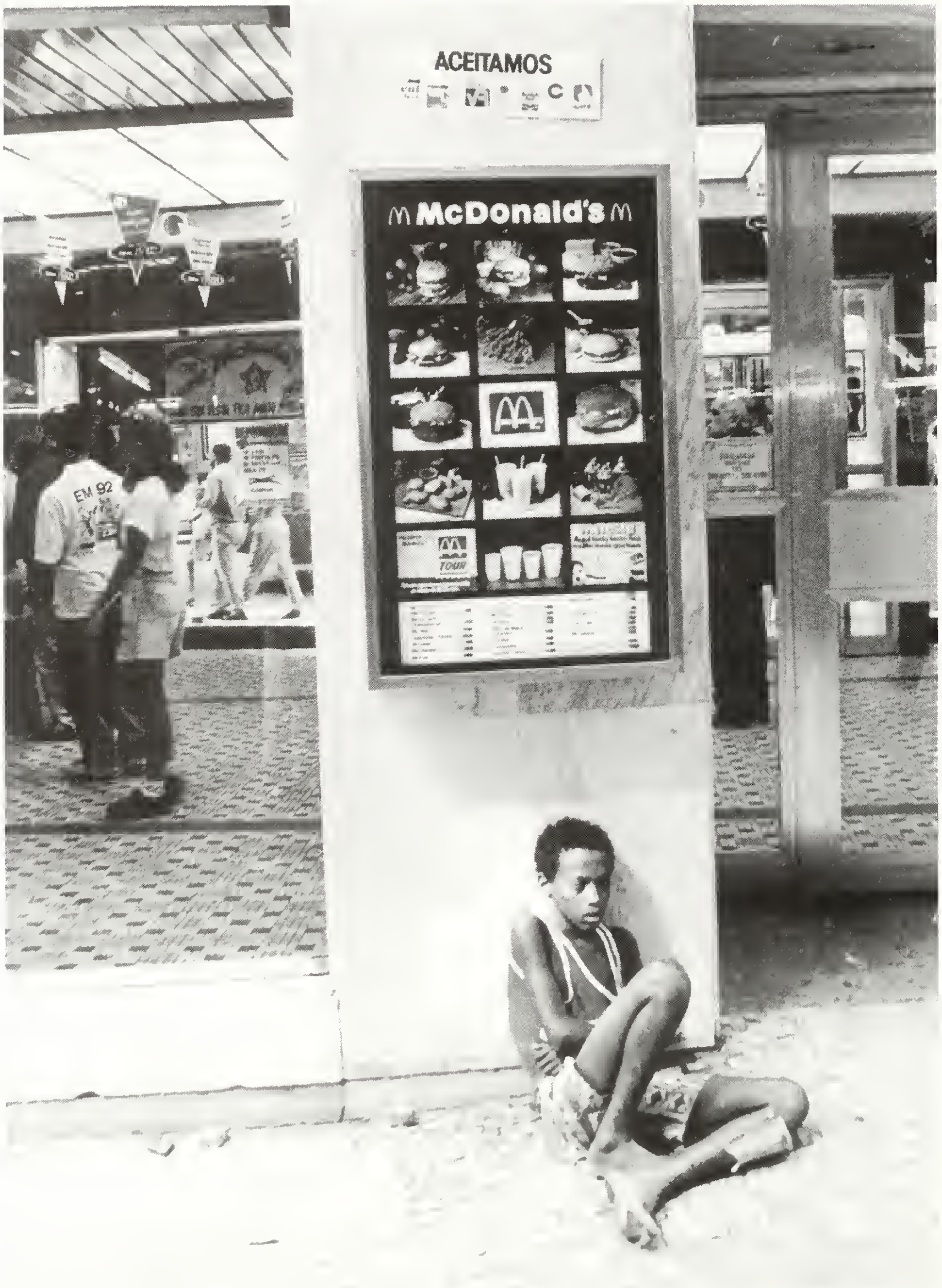

Photo Oikoumene, World Council of Churches

Unwanted: *A street child in front of McDonald's in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*

Questions asked of street children in Brazil

(from Rev. Zeni de Lima Soares):

What are you afraid of?

1. Being sick and not being able to work
2. Not bringing money home
3. Getting shot
4. Going to the police
5. Arriving home and finding everyone dead
6. Getting beaten up
7. Being arrested because of a lack of a document

What three things do you not do but would like to do?

1. Go for a walk every Sunday; exercise, play
2. Swim, go to the movies, play ball
3. Swim, play ball, play at night
4. Play, work in peace, live a calm life

Questions asked of homeless children in the United States

(from *State of America's Children 1992*):

What do you like best about yourself?

"That I haven't gone crazy yet." (*10-year-old girl*)

What do you expect for the future?

"When I grow up, I'll live in a place with furniture." (*7-year-old boy*)

The Children's Defense Fund's third annual National Observance of Children's Sabbaths will be Oct. 14-16. This focuses attention on the needs of children and the religious community's responses. CDF Religious Affairs staff are available for more information. Contact them at Children's Defense Fund, 25 E St. N.W., Washington, DC 20001; phone (202) 628-8787 or fax (202) 662-3510.

What you can do

- Learn more about children's struggles by reading one of the resources listed on page 5.
- Encourage political leaders to support ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Support organizations advocating for children's rights, for example: your own denomination, Church World Service, Bread for the World, The Children's Defense Fund.
- Get involved in local community efforts to serve the children of your area: tutoring, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, youth work.
- Pay attention, risk involvement, open your heart, pray.

At age 12, Tonio supports his mother and younger brother and sister on two or three dollars a day.

Life in the parking lot

Bob Molsberry

Tonio darts across the parking lot in front of Managua's central post office dodging cars, his bare feet slapping on the hot pavement. Other kids appear from behind parked cars in a desperate race to catch the attention of a driver just swinging into the lot. This time Tonio wins. The driver points to him as the car pulls into a parking space.

Tonio "watches" cars. For a few cents he'll guard your car so it's not vandalized while you're in the post office. He's on the job every afternoon. Looking more like 7 than the 12 years he claims, Tonio makes two or three dollars a day, which he takes home to his mother. He lives with her and a younger brother and sister in a tin and cardboard shack in a nearby squatters' settlement. Tonio's family relies on his income. Offer him a Coke and he'll decline. He needs the money more.

According to World Bank figures, each child born in Nicaragua begins life $3,000 in debt; many spend the rest of their lives working it off.

Life in the parking lot is brutal and fast-paced. Last year Tonio broke his arm when he was hit by a car. He's often punched by older boys. Though he enjoys playing marbles and baseball, he rarely has time. Scrambling for tips is a full-time job. Tonio's situation is becoming more and more commonplace in Nicaragua, where economic policies laid down by international lending agencies are making life increasingly difficult for the majority of the 4 million inhabitants. As public spending is cut, credit tightened, state enterprises privatized and trade liberalized, unemployment and poverty have skyrocketed. Sixty percent of the population is out of work. Three-quarters live in poverty.

The social costs are felt more keenly by the young. According to World Bank figures, each child born in Nicaragua begins life $3,000 in debt, an amount reflecting the per capita distribution of Nicaragua's foreign debt. Many spend the rest of their lives working it off.

Nicaragua is a young country, with more than half the population less than 16 years old. One out of every three minors, nearly three-quarters of a million children, live in what the United Nations calls "especially difficult circumstances." Twenty-three percent of children under 6 suffer some degree of malnutrition. One out of every four children doesn't attend school, due to shrinking education budgets and parents' inability to pay for fees, books and uniforms.

About 6,000 children live and work on the streets of Managua. Most are there because of unstable family situations exacerbated by the growing economic crisis. While they're not preyed upon like the street children in such places as Brazil and Guatemala, their lives are difficult nonetheless. They hover in ragged armies at every stoplight selling gum and newspapers, washing windshields and begging. They're in the parking lot, like Tonio, watching cars. They precede the garbage trucks down the streets, looking for edible or recyclable rubbish. Girls Tonio's age are introduced to prostitution. Hundreds have found their way to Managua's sprawling Eastern Market, where they steal to survive and sniff glue at night in abandoned buildings to get high and escape their sorry plight.

It's anybody's guess what the future holds for kids like Tonio. But if current economic policies are left in place, it is hard to be optimistic.

Bob Molsberry worked with Mennonite Central Committee in Nicaragua. This story originally appeared in MCC Contact, *November 1993.*

‘I’ve come to give my baby away’

What do you say to a woman who wants to give you her baby because she cannot support it?

Audrey Patterson

I was lying down for an afternoon nap when I heard the knock on the door of the convent clinic.

“I’ve come to give my baby away,” said the woman at the door.

I woke up in a hurry.

A healthy five-day-old, still red and wrinkled, slept serenely in her arms as the woman matter-of-factly explained her circumstances.

The baby was a male—the eighth of eight sons. The woman was 34 years old. Her husband had left just as her pregnancy began. Shortly thereafter her seventh son, who would have been starting to walk and babble, became so ill that he required constant care.

She made her decision. She couldn’t cope with both children. Her headscarf and the cotton in her ears were Salvadoran postpartum traditions, but by walking four hours to reach the church, she had broken the taboo against strenuous activity within 40 days of delivery.

“I’m poor,” she said, “and alone. I must care for my seven other children by myself, and the oldest is only 14. I have no one to help with the never-ending woman’s work.”

We were dumbfounded. We had seen babies die under similar circumstances, but we had never received a request like this. She said she wanted her child to live. Couldn’t we find an adoptive family?

> *“I’m poor,” she said, “and alone. I must care for my seven other children by myself, and the oldest is only 14. I have no one to help with the never-ending woman’s work.”*

We hedged and offered other help—milk to bottlefeed the sick child, community support. Finally, she agreed to care for the newborn until we found an adoptive family.

On the appointed day, she again made the trek back to town. She remained dry-eyed as she nursed her son one last time and kissed him goodbye. She left him a change of clothes, booties and a pretty receiving blanket, saying, as she had many times, “I’m a poor woman; I just don’t know what else to do.”

Audrey Patterson, a nurse, worked with Mennonite Central Committee in El Salvador. She is from Narvon, Pa., and is a member of Meadville Mennonite Church in Kinzers, Pa. Reprinted from WMSC Voice, *March 1994.*

Saving children from deadly glue

Grant Gallup

Nicaragua is still here, still in struggle against the new world order of neo-liberalism, which is shutting the poor out of history, but there are nevertheless wonderful things happening because of small acts of solidarity and sharing. In the last year, the mini-bank that Casa Ave Maria was able to set up in Masaya, with the help of Synapses, has continued to make small loans to the many small artisan enterprises—usually family workshops—which continue the traditional crafts of woodcarving, sewing hammocks and weaving rugs, furniture building and ceramics.

We helped build dormitories for the boys at San Marcos, on the Quincho Barrilete farm there, where former glue-sniffing children from the Oriental Market have found refuge and a resurrection of life. Although “savage capitalism,” as John Paul II calls it, is ultimately responsible for the phenomenon of throwaway children in the Third World, the toxicity of the glue many of them sniff here (to quell hunger pangs) is the direct responsibility of the U.S. manufacturer H.B. Fuller Co. of St. Paul, Minn.

Children throughout Latin America are inhaling the industrial adhesive (used here as a shoemaker’s glue), but the company refuses to take responsibility for the nerve damage and organ failure in these children. They refuse to pilot-test additives for the export product that have proven successful as deterrents to glue-sniffing in the United States.

Grant Gallup works in Nicaragua. Reprinted from Winter 1994 issue of Synapses.

Made in U.S.A.: *A street child sniffs glue in downtown Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.*

A Brazilian Mennonite opens her heart to the disadvantaged children of Campinas.

Planning for 1,000 years

Carla Reimer

It looks like any other child-care center. Brightly colored drawings neatly line the walls. At tables budding artists are hard at work on new masterpieces.

But for the 60 some children who come here on weekdays, this place is more than a child-care center—it is a sanctuary from homes where poverty, malnutrition and abuse are common.

Brazilian Mennonite Iana Gomez is the director of this children's community center, located in one of the poorer neighborhoods in Campinas. She has the tough task of deciding which children are eligible for the program that is largely funded by the city government.

"Basically, I try to determine if the child is at risk for living on the street or for getting into drugs," she says. "You can tell if a child is in a setting where they are suffering."

Dynamic presence: With oodles of energy and a fun-loving disposition, Gomez is a hit at the center, where she has worked for less than a year. When she enters the activity room, it is not long before she is surrounded by small bodies eager to be close to her.

"Being a Christian has made me see children as more than just physical and intellectual beings. Children must be treated as whole persons," she says.

As a result, she tries to meet their physical and emotional needs. The children, ages 7 to 14, have the opportunity to learn skills through craft projects such as rug making and cross-stitch. Sometimes they sell their projects at bazaars to raise money for the school.

When Gomez found out that some children had dropped out of the program to earn money for their families, she started a policy in which some of the money from the projects went home with the children.

Beauty contest: Gomez does not hesitate to get involved in the children's problems. She recalls how one girl, Luciana, "had a sad look." While other girls would pretend they were in a beauty contest, Luciana would not join them because she thought she was ugly.

"Beauty is a relative thing. Some people think blonde hair and blue eyes are beautiful; others like dark skin and kinky hair," Gomez told Luciana. "It is more important to feel pretty."

After that, Luciana decided to participate in a pretend beauty contest. The children were the judges. She received second place.

Gomez thinks it would be a good idea to have a day at the center that would encourage all the children to feel good about the way they look. "They could take baths and wash their hair. I could even call in a beautician," she says. "Then we could lower the mirrors so they could see all of themselves.

"At home they may only have little pieces of mirror. But they never see their whole body. This is part of what they need to see themselves as a complete person. It seems like nothing, but it helps."

Scary statistics: The statistics are stacked against children such as Luciana. Approximately 15 million Brazilians ages 18 and younger live in poverty, according to the 1991 government census. The World Health Organization reports that nearly all the children who live on the streets of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, use drugs, and 55 percent have attempted suicide. Many are killed in an effort to "clean up" the streets. More than 5,600 children ages 5 to 17 were murdered between 1987 and 1991, according to Americas Watch.

While Gomez often is discouraged by these realities, she still believes education can offer hope. Recalling a Chinese proverb, she says, "'If you are planning for one year, plant rice. If you are planning for 10 years, plant a tree. If you are planning for 1,000 years, educate the people."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church. She traveled in Brazil last April.

Carla Reimer

Caring for the children: *Iana Gomez directs a community center for children who are at risk in Campinas, Brazil.*

Letters

Back page first

I have been reading *The Mennonite* for more than 50 years and still find it informative, instructive and spiritually nurturing. The editorials are consistently intellectually and religiously stimulating. I liken them to a good, brief sermon: pointed, with illustrations and moral values that feed the mind and stir the soul. I like the editorials so well that I regularly begin reading each new issue by turning first to the back page, where the editorials appear.

Church members who don't subscribe to *The Mennonite*, or read it regularly if they do receive it, remind me of people who belong to a church but don't attend or support it. As a consequence, they don't know what is going on; they don't know what its needs and deeds are and thus can't claim to be of much help or encouragement to congregation or conference. *J. Winfield Fretz, North Newton, Kan.*

Christians and business

Thanks for your feature of Christians and business in the July 26 issue. As you know, the subject is at the heart of what Mennonite Economic Development Associates does. We are pleased to add to the discussion through our network of Christians who seek to live out their faith while earning a living and through our publication, *The Marketplace*. It's good to see a denominational periodical picking up the themes. *Glen Hostetler, MEDA, Lancaster, Pa.*

Better hope you don't get sick

After reading the many letters addressing health-care reform, it is difficult for me to understand why anyone, especially Christians with a concern for the poor and less fortunate, would be opposed to a full and fair medical coverage for everyone.

I don't think people who can't afford, or were cut off because of previous illness, really care what you happen to call the various plans that are being offered by the various political groups as long as they can receive good medical care—and can afford it.

Last week I happened to catch Pat Robertson's television program hosting Texas Senator Phil Gramm lambasting a national health-care policy. Now here were two well-heeled gentlemen making light of the poor who didn't have health-care coverage because they couldn't afford it. (And of course Senator Gramm's is paid for by our tax money.)

Pat Robertson is spending over $1 million trying to prevent any plan to pass. Now if he would spend this amount to help those who don't have coverage I could have some respect for him.

And if the health insurance companies have over $100 million to spend trying to defeat any plan developed—doesn't that tell us something? We are being overcharged.

Someone has well-stated that senators Gramm and Robert Dole's plan is "Just hope and pray you don't get sick." *Jack Stauffer, Newton, Kan.*

Reconsider priorities

We would like to add our names to a long list of names who oppose recent action of the board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. The action to de-emphasize the peace and justice aspect of our conference can only result in making us less Anabaptist and less Mennonite at a time when our churches and all Christianity need this basic ingredient of the Mennonite church.

The Hull family has been extremely effective in its contributions to our church for over 15 years. They have been active among other things in the Western District Conference retreat program. They have been program directors, counselors and excellent role models for many young people in recent years.

Considering the contributions made by this family to the Christian church, it is inconceivable that we do not have a position for them in our conference. Should we perhaps reconsider our priorities? *J. Hobart and Lorene Goering, Moundridge, Kan.*

Thanks from Mozambique

We have just received a bundle of copies of *The Mennonite* that Jim and Anna Juhnke brought us from North Newton, Kan. What a treasure! We have just browsed through a few of them and are newly impressed by the attractive, bright format, relevant issues and appealing titles.

We look forward to reading *The Mennonite* in our Mozambique setting where we will have fewer church activities to attend and longer evenings at home because of security precautions. It will be a significant lifeline for us, both for inspirational/devotional reading and to keep us in touch with our home churches and conference. *Fremont and Sara Regier, Maputo, Mozambique*

More biblical reflections

I'm sorry but I'm not renewing my subscription. I had hoped *The Mennonite* would include more biblical/scriptural investigation and reflections, like your section entitled "Bible"—but that is only run occasionally, i.e. perhaps every three issues or so and so is too limited for me. The Anabaptist movement is centered in the Scriptures and I just feel *The Mennonite* does too little of it to meet one of the important things I look to a publication to do. *Bob Tice, Buffalo, N.Y.*

Ideas your church can try

North Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church wanted to affirm and celebrate the musical gifts developed by congregational members, so it planned a recital for a midweek evening service. All ages were welcomed.

Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan., invited all its members to meet together one Sunday to tell stories of what it was like growing up Mennonite, Methodist, Lutheran, Catholic or whatever. People responded to the following questions: How did you understand your faith to be distinctive from others? What jokes did you tell about yourselves and others?

Fiscal health

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The credit card game

Choose the card that best fits your needs.

J.B. Miller

Almost every week, and sometimes it seems like every day, I receive a solicitation inviting me to enlarge my credit card collection. Even though I live in the Midwest, letters come from California, New York, Maryland, Virginia, Illinois and all points in between. You know what it's like.

Why is there so much credit card solicitation? Quite simply because the credit card industry is incredibly profitable for the issuers. While interest rates paid on savings accounts and certificates of deposit dropped over the last few years, many credit card issuers did not drop the rate charged on their credit cards, some remaining in the 18 to 21 percent area, making credit cards a profitable proposition for the credit card industry.

While there are two major credit cards in North America, Visa and MasterCard, they are issued by hundreds of banks, each with its own fees, interest rates, credit decisions and credit limits. As a borrower, you may pay the outstanding balance each month or pay a minimum amount, often 2.5 percent of the outstanding balance. On the other hand, American Express and Diner's Club generally require paying the balance in full each month.

Each of the cards issues a "premier" card, usually a gold or platinum card. While these cards may offer added benefits, including higher credit limits, they often also include higher annual fees.

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

With this tremendous marketing effort on the part of banks, some people find themselves in trouble with their cards. Purchases may have been made months or even years ago, yet the pain of paying for those purchases remains.

Credit card finance charges are among the highest rates paid by consumers. Since the interest is not tax deductible, credit cards should be used as a convenience, not as a means of financing purchases.

If you are using the same card you have had for years, you may want to compare the fees, interest rates and any other charges with what other card issuers are offering. Here are some things to consider:

Low interest rate: If you can't pay your balance in full each month, look for the card with the lowest interest rate, then pay more than the minimum balance. The reasons are obvious. For example, it would take eight years and eight months to pay off a $1,000 balance at 16.5 percent if the cardholder paid only the minimum payment. However, if you pay just $10 above the minimum, it would take only three years to pay off the debt and cost $500 less in interest.

Find the best card for your needs and stick to one or two cards. Don't collect them like baseball cards. For some the temptation is too much, and abuse soon follows.

Annual fee: If you pay an annual fee, stop it unless you enjoy paying for something you could get free. Find a card that does not charge an annual fee. There are plenty of places that offer free cards that work just as well as the others.

Extra fees: Unless you know and use the benefits of a gold or platinum card, trade it in for a regular one, especially if there are extra fees attached. So what if the plain card doesn't have status? When did your gold or platinum card bring you wealth or happiness?

Grace period: Make sure your card gives you a grace period to pay your balance. Interest charges should not begin on the day the purchase is made but 15 to 25 days from the date of billing.

A list: Keep a separate list of all your credit cards, card numbers and the issuing institutions. Inform them immediately of a lost of stolen card, since you can be liable for up to $50 for unauthorized use.

Paying balance: If you have problems with using a credit card too much and are unable to pay the outstanding balance each month, consider shifting to an American Express card or another card that requires payment in full each month. This will help you keep your spending in line with your ability to pay, even though these cards have annual fees.

Rights: Know your rights as a consumer. Strict federal regulations are in place to handle disputes with card purchases. Each year the issuer sends you a notice of how disputes are resolved.

Find the best card for your needs and stick to one or two cards. Don't collect them like baseball cards. For some the temptation is too much, and abuse soon follows.

If you want to break free of the credit card cycle, or if you want information about less expensive cards, you may contact Bankcard Holders of America, 524 Branch Drive, Salem, VA 24153. But even they have an annual membership fee of $24. Membership includes a newsletter, lists of low-interest-rate credit cards and a brochure with 10 strategies for debt reduction. Memberships also support lobbying efforts on behalf of card users.

Credit cards can be a tremendous convenience, but they should be viewed as exactly that, a convenience, not as an open line of long-term credit. Good stewardship demands that we look carefully at the credit cards we use and the way we use them.

Saved from the streets

One boy's journey from an abusive home to a welcoming church

Carla Reimer

Until he was a 13-year-old, Wellington dos Santos thought most kids were physically abused by their parents. "I accepted it as normal because it was all that I had experienced," said Wellington, who is now a young adult.

The physical abuse started at age 5, when his mother married a man who had recently been released from prison, he said in an interview in Recife, Brazil.

His new stepfather disliked Wellington and beat him regularly. "A lot of times it happened for no particular reason. I was punished for everything I did," he said.

Unfortunately, his mother did nothing to protect Wellington. "She always supported my stepfather because he provided the income for the family," he said, noting that like many families in Brazil, they were poor.

As a result of his problems at home, Wellington spent much of his time, outside of school, on the street. "I was not someone who looked for trouble. I tried to stay out of my stepfather's hair. I more or less only went to the house to eat," he said.

When he was about 13 years old, Wellington decided he could no longer survive his home situation, even though he was not there much. His shift in attitude occurred after an extremely harsh beating from his stepfather. His stepfather even kicked him out of the house after he had hit him. His mother did nothing to stop his actions.

Wellington went to live with his grandmother. But after one week, she asked him to return home because she did not have the resources to take care of him.

"After this I realized that even though this was my reality, it was not normal or good," he said. "From that point on I didn't follow my stepfather. I started working at a shoe repair shop and studying at the same time."

He also embarked on a search for his biological father. "I was looking for help, support, kindness—everything I didn't have," he said.

Soldier: When he finally found his father, Wellington "almost fainted, not because I had found my father but because he was a soldier. I was scared of him."

His father was not too happy to see Wellington. "He gave me a cold reception. I realized I had wasted my time," he said. "I couldn't go back in time and recapture the past. I couldn't have the dream of what I was looking for."

This discovery, coupled with other problems, led Wellington to "lose control" of his life at age 16. "Where I lived, the course for everyone was downhill," he said. "I never wanted to destroy myself. But the time arrived when I couldn't take it all.

Wellington dos Santos

"I wasn't really worried about living on the street, because it was better than being at home."

"I stopped studying. I gradually lost interest in everything. I started taking drugs. The drugs were an escape because I didn't have any other way out."

To make matters worse, his stepfather gave his mother an ultimatum: He would leave her unless her son moved out. Wellington was once more sent to his grandmother's house and soon ended up on the street again. "I wasn't really worried about living on the street, because it was better than being at home," he said.

At the same time, he realized he was headed on a downhill path like so many of his friends. Luckily, he met Mennonite mission workers Mel and Enid Letkeman and other members of the Lagoa Encantada Mennonite Church before it was too late. The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church provides financial and personnel support to the Brazilian Mennonite churches.

"Most people would have thought I was a lost cause since I was involved in drugs," he said. "But the people at the church trusted me and thought I was deserving of help."

Today Wellington has stopped using drugs. Instead he is developing his skills in drama and music, and he works with children through his involvement at the church.

He also is living with his father. Even though he isn't too happy with the "military camp" atmosphere there, he is thankful that he no longer faces physical abuse.

Sometimes Wellington still feels like there is "a piece of my life missing because I grew up with an emptiness that wasn't filled." But even at times when he is discouraged, he believes God is helping him. "If you don't believe in God, you don't have any direction or light," he said.

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church. She traveled in Brazil last April.

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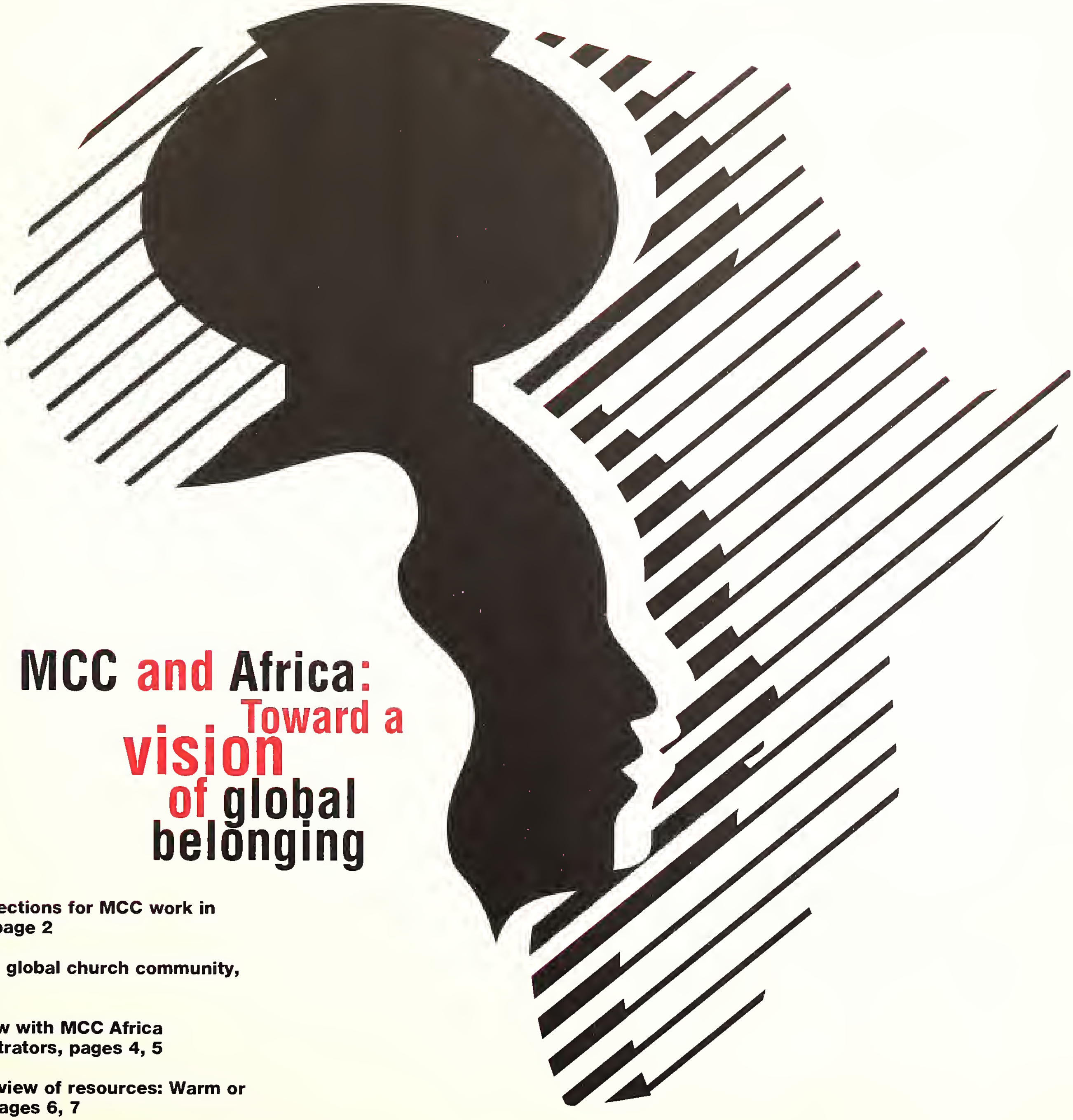
MCC contact



MCC and Africa: Toward a vision of global belonging

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New directions for MCC work in Africa

QUESTION:

In a world where Africa is often ignored or treated like a permanent welfare case, how can African and North American Christians relate to one another in a helpful, respectful way?

In January 1993 a group of MCC workers, friends and colleagues, African and North American, met in Kenya to discuss how MCC should work in Africa in the future.

Out of this meeting grew "Toward a vision of global belonging: MCC and Africa," a document that calls North Americans and Africans to "move beyond donor/recipient relationships" toward relationships that affirm our common humanity as citizens of the world and our common status as children of God.

African friends and MCC workers agreed that North Americans, with their greater access to material wealth, should continue to share these resources with African brothers and sisters. But because those resources ultimately belong to God, Christians in North America and Africa should work together to determine the best stewardship of resources. Mutuality should guide decisions and the sharing should be a reciprocal, or two-way, process with North Americans being willing to receive as well as give.

As MCC workers and African partners plan program, a key consideration should be, "How does this activity create, strengthen and encourage local and global community?"

The MCC Executive Committee affirmed the Africa vision statement at its February 1994 Annual Meeting.

This issue of MCC Contact attempts to explain:

- how MCC's experiences in Africa have led to this vision;
- how material resources can unite, rather than divide communities;
- how an exhibit of ordinary, everyday items of African life, study tours to Africa and written materials and videos can help North Americans learn to know and appreciate African brothers and sisters.

For a copy of "Toward a vision of global belonging: MCC and Africa," or to offer feedback, contact Africa Department, Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151.

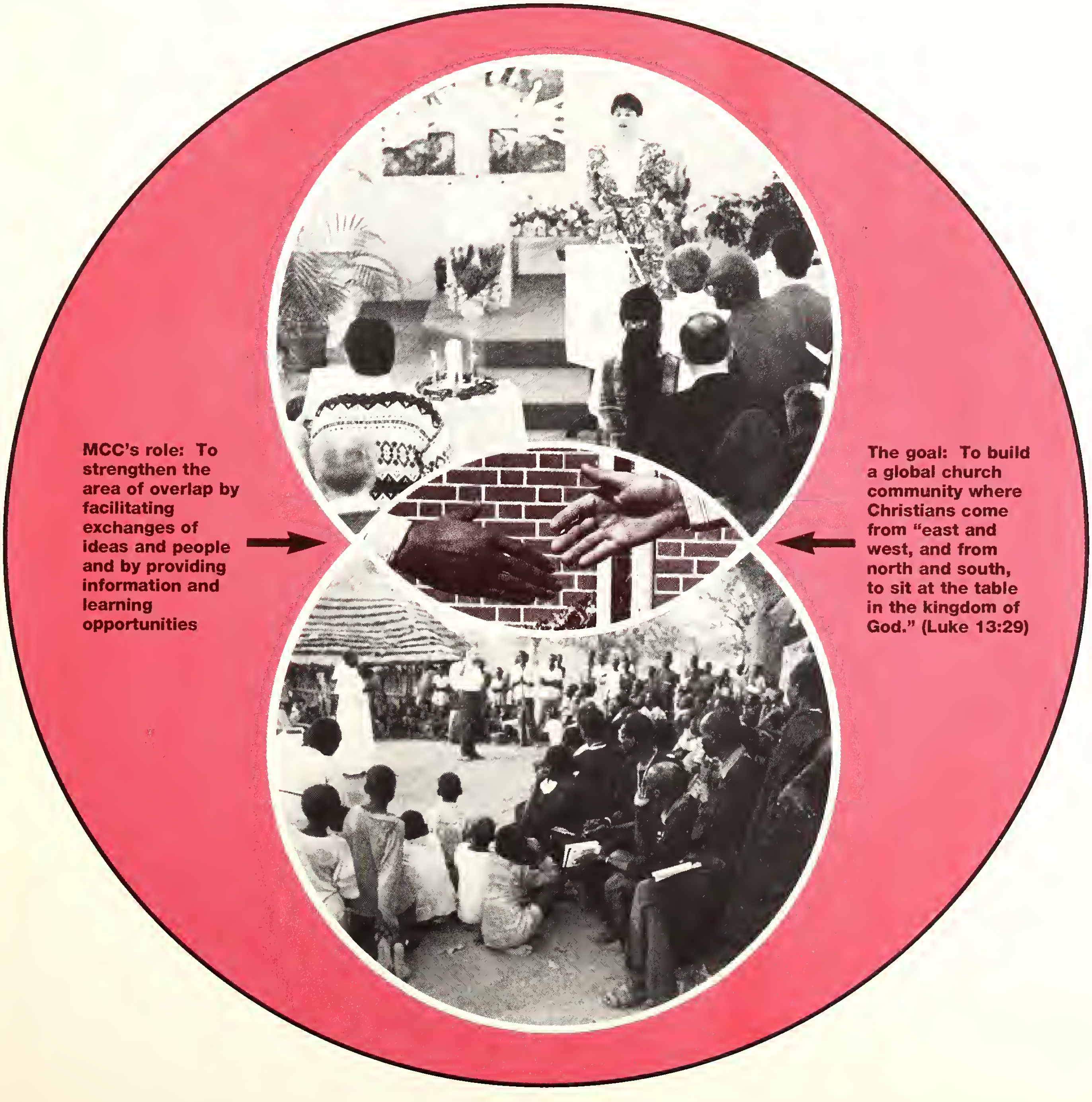
MCC history in Africa

1945 TO 1960	1960 TO 1980	1980 TO 1993	1994
Beginning years	**Evolving years**	**Learning years**	**New mode of service affirmed**
At World War II's end, with other Mennonite agencies, MCC sent medical workers and educators to Ethiopia and assisted during a famine. Several Mennonite conscientious objectors worked in Africa on construction, development and vocational training through MCC's Civilian Public Service.	MCC Peace Section initiated a peace program; conscientious objectors to war continued to serve in agricultural and other development assignments. MCC founded Teachers Abroad Program to assist newly independent African nations' education systems. MCC established a pattern of working in conjunction with Mennonite, Brethren in Christ and other church groups, rather than beginning independent programs.	MCC workers in Africa increasingly questioned the effectiveness of traditional development and experimented with new models. MCC relief assistance grew in response to famine. Africa programs continued to promote peace and reconciliation.	MCC board affirms new document that affirms "mutuality" as MCC Africa mode. Building global church community, as described in Luke 13:29, will be the goal of MCC work in Africa.

Building global church community

This diagram emerged from a January 1993 meeting as MCC workers and African friends discussed models for relationships between African and North American Christians, and what MCC's role should be.

As North American and African churches minister, each can learn from the faithfulness of the other.



North American Churches

MCC's role: To strengthen the area of overlap by facilitating exchanges of ideas and people and by providing information and learning opportunities

The goal: To build a global church community where Christians come from "east and west, and from north and south, to sit at the table in the kingdom of God." (Luke 13:29)

African Churches

INTERVIEW:

MCC Africa administrators discuss their vision

What has MCC learned from its work in Africa since 1960?

Jim Shenk: We have learned the importance of relationships. Over the past 15 years MCC has provided food and other material resources worth more than $70 million U.S./$97 million Cdn. to Africa. Periodically we have found simple acts of generosity can create conflict between groups, cause dependency or drive local farmers out of business. Now when we decide about MCC projects, we consider not only need but also whether MCC involvement would contribute to or break down community.

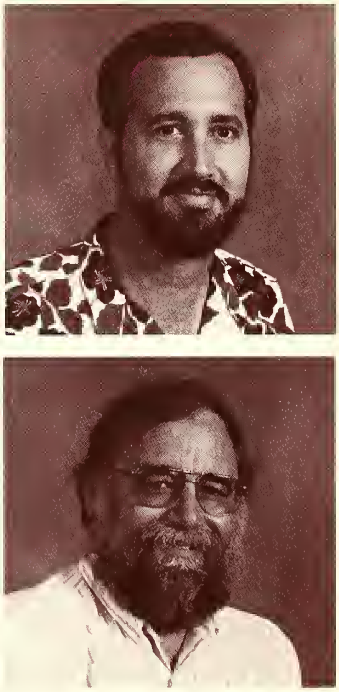
Eric Olfert: In the early 1960s when the MCC Africa program began, many African countries were gaining independence from colonial rule. It was a time of incredible optimism. People sensed that Africa could be helped to quickly "catch up" with the rest of the world, if people of good will everywhere would just lend a hand.

Over the past three decades we have learned that North Americans cannot "fix" Africa. Development involves developing self-confidence, self-reliance and a willingness to tackle one's own problems. Imported answers can be detrimental and may reinforce notions that Africa is weak, primitive and has nothing to offer — that all solutions must come from outside Africa.

MCC has learned that to be useful to the spiritual (in the broadest sense) dimensions of development, we need to focus on getting our relationships, as individuals, as organizations and as peoples, onto a healthier plane.

What hinders relationships between Africans and North Americans?

Eric Olfert: Europeans' military conquest and colonization of Africa obviously was not a good beginning. Since formal independence, North Americans and Europeans have continued to dominate the world, including Africa, through economics and technology.



Jim Shenk (top) and Eric Olfert serve as MCC Africa co-secretaries.

Even as we have tried to help through government and private assistance programs, we have found it difficult to give up control of these programs. Most development assistance programs use North American political and economic structures and lifestyles as the standard against which recipient societies and development processes are measured. "Need" is defined as the lack of something the donor has to give. Development programs are evaluated by how well they reproduce donors' structures and lifestyles. If positive aspects of culture, such as respect for the elderly, are not measured and therefore not valued, a loss of self-identity can result. This can lead to unhealthy dependency.

Africans complain that they are the caboose of the development train, speeding to a destination determined by the locomotives, such as the United States and Canada. The caboose, no matter how much it tries, or how much others help it, will never be able to do more than keep up. It will never become an equal or have a role in deciding direction.

ating to Africa

Before our individual and corporate relationships with Africa can become equal, mutual and healthy, we need to find new models for relating to one another. We should not view ourselves as the powerful helping the weak, but should learn to see ourselves as brothers and sisters with different, but equally valid, traditions, cultures and world views. We need to find better ways of sharing control of the resources God has entrusted to us.

How is Africa different from other continents?

Jim Shenk: Self-identity and self-reliance in Africa were systematically dismantled during the colonial experience. In southern Africa early traders found people producing quality iron equal to or better than iron manufactured in Europe at the time. Colonial powers passed laws that limited and eventually wiped out this industry so European iron could be marketed in Africa. This is one example of how colonial rule sapped the strength from Africa.

Africa is only a couple of decades removed from direct European rule. It is only now that Africans are beginning to establish their own models, systems and understandings of self, corporately and individually. This is the hopeful part. But Africa's search for alternatives comes at a time of global economic stagnation and major political transitions, making it difficult for Africa to find the energy and space to work out a more just relationship with the rest of the world.

Why do MCC workers in Africa and African partners feel they need to articulate their vision for work in Africa at this time?

Jim Shenk: Africa is currently in a state of transition. At certain times and places, such as recently in Somalia and Rwanda, this is better described as chaos. So this is a natural time for MCC workers in Africa to think about future direction. As MCC workers and African partners discuss how MCC has moved from relief to rebuilding after wars and natural disasters to long-term development work in Africa, we do not feel a strong need to limit or prioritize what we do. Food assistance, health care, water projects — all of these can be helpful.

But we need to rethink how we implement these projects and how we make decisions. We need to be more transparent about the resources both Africans and North Americans have and how we can share them. We need to see our relationships as two-way and mutually supportive. We need to share decision-making with Africans.

Eric Olfert: Beginning in 1990, demands for democratic rule have swept Africa. Africa is now struggling to accomplish a "second liberation," this time from the abuses of political structures misappropriated by African tyrants. Jose Chipenda of the All Africa Conference of Churches believes that for the first time since the mid-1500s, Africa is setting its own agenda and options.

At the same time this is happening in Africa, North Americans are beginning to ask for more first-hand involvement in overseas ministries. We strongly affirm the more complete and healthy human relationships that could result from direct connections between North Americans and Africans, but we are also concerned that a new wave of small, North American-controlled initiatives to "solve" Africa's problems could overwhelm Africa's healthy efforts to take charge of its own problems.

It is out of this changing context and potential collision that we felt we should articulate a new and growing vision.

African view of resources: *warm or*

While living in Nigeria in the early 1980s I became aware that Africans have two different ways of viewing resources — as “warm” or as “cold” — with differing moral obligations attached to each.

During a trip to the market, I was shocked to discover the battered body of a young man. I was told he had been beaten to death for picking pockets. Our more traditional Nigerian friends generally agreed that he “had got what he deserved.” The same sentiment was expressed in later years when a military government executed armed robbers.

Several days later, the local paper carried the story of a wealthy Nigerian who had cheated the Nigerian government on a contract to build a new telephone exchange building. When a British firm arrived to install the telephone equipment, whole walls collapsed as they tried to drill holes to install wiring. An engineering firm hired to inspect the building condemned it due to inadequate reinforcing steel and weak concrete mixes.

My same Nigerian friends who had approved the beating death of the market thief, however, applauded this man’s success and expressed envy for his cleverness at having found a way to cheat the government.

Several years ago I read an article in which an author from Burkina Faso explained that his society divides money into “warm” and “cold” categories. “Warm” money is earned by the sweat of someone’s brow or given by someone’s father. The moral understandings and obligation about “warm” money and its use are clear and binding. Debts are to be repaid; theft is not acceptable.

“Cold” money, on the other hand, arrives from a source that has not earned any allegiance or loyalty. It carries with it little or no obligation to honor agreements or repay loans. It typically comes from or belongs to governments, to nongovernmental organizations or to expatriates.

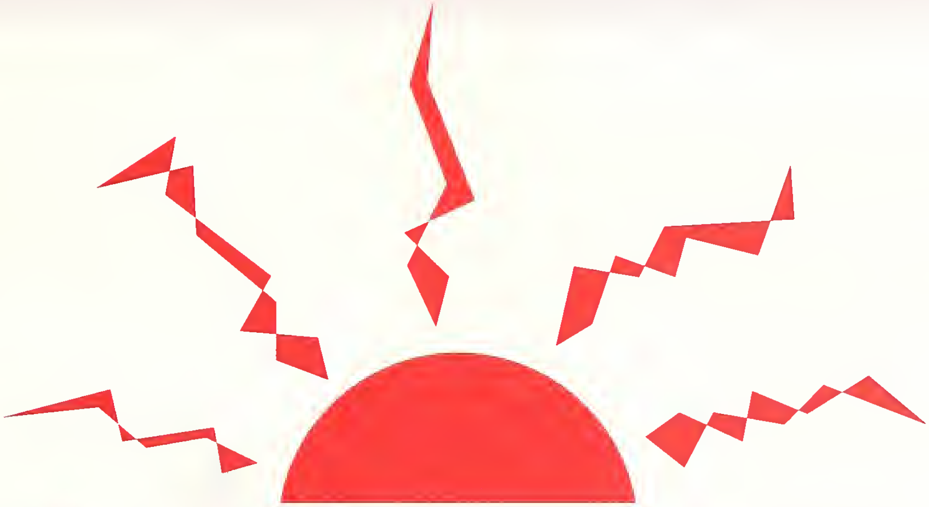
A Somali friend recently told me the Somali language includes two words for “goods.” One of these words is more accurately translated as “lootable goods.”

“Cold” resources are inherently divisive. They provoke competition and are won by the most clever, aggressive or strongest. “Cold” resources pit people against one other; “warm” resources build up the community.

MCC resources, at first glance, belong in the “cold” category. They come from a distant source, from people outside the recipients’ family and ethnic groups. Thus we must “earn” our way into the warmth of the community through our relationships so our resources can become “warm” and therefore unifying and helpful.

••• **Eric Olfert of Akron, Pa.**
MCC Africa desk, Akron

old?



Wheat farmers' sweat, quilters' careful stitches produce warm resources

MCC's material resources start out "warm." They are created by the sweat of the Kansas farmer who plants and harvests an extra acre of wheat, donating the profit to MCC. Blankets carefully stitched, corner matching corner perfectly, warmly declare, "I care for you." Soft flannel diapers and receiving blankets hemmed in tiny stitches, neatly folded and pinned are gifts of love for another mother's newborn. North American material gifts are intended to be warm resources.

But somewhere between the loading dock in the Baltimore, Md., harbor and the port of call in Africa, they cool off. Some recipients may not know what it's like to worry Kansas wheat to harvest; some may not recognize the precision required to produce perfectly square blocks for a blanket. The baby clothes so delicately hemmed may seem factory produced and do not reveal the love of their maker.

It is difficult to acknowledge that material resource gifts could be perceived as "cold" and therefore liable for misuse. MCC workers say that resources need to be "warmed" so they do not divide a community. What more can we do from North America to warm the resources, to use the resources as channels for people-to-people connections?

MCC's relief history holds precedent for naming ourselves and our motivation for sharing material resources. In *A little bit of love*, Ida Stoltzfus recalls, "Our family received names and addresses of families in Europe, and, after letters were exchanged to find out what age persons made up the family and what would be of use to them, we prepared boxes of food and clothing and shipped them to Europe 'In the Name of Christ.'"

Cultural and language similarities between Europeans and North Americans made this exchange of letters and information feasible. In recent years, MCC has not encouraged the personalizing of gifts, wanting to protect the giver from further personal requests for assistance and to prevent dependency.

What steps can North Americans and Africans take to develop understandings that not only warm the resources but also enable us to know something about one another? MCC in the 1990s welcomes constituents to send messages about the work of their hands and themselves with their gifts. A simple message like "This blanket was made for you by Mary, age 78, in Indiana, U.S.A.," provides a few details to help warm-up cold resources. Photos of folks gathering around a quilt or canning meat reveal who we are, that we work together in the community of faith to share with others and that we enjoy the work.

In 1993, North Americans sent 1,011 buckets filled with school and dental supplies to Vietnam. The brightly decorated plastic drywall buckets, plastered with children's names, with hearts and flowers, birds and trees conveyed messages of love. MCC workers visited several Vietnamese schools that received the supplies and showed the teachers photographs of North American children decorating and filling buckets. The recipients saw that these supplies came not from an anonymous source but from ordinary, caring North Americans who wanted to overcome past hatreds and desired a more friendly future.

North Americans have experience in sharing resources with Africans but have fewer opportunities to understand African culture or learn from and experience the vibrant faith of African Christians. People-to-people exchanges will warm North American material resources and help the North American church learn from the faith experiences of African Christians.

North American constituents will gladly give and receive, doing both "In the Name of Christ."

••• **Brenda Wagner of Leola, Pa.**
MCC U.S. Constituency Ministries, Akron

Joyce, the wife of an influential Maasai elder, and project assistant Francis Sakuda.

Material Culture Exhibit Celebrates Kenya's Pastoralists

In a country beset by ethnic fighting, unemployment and drought, Kenyan pastoralists—roving livestock herders—face the added burden of prejudice and mistrust by people of other ethnic groups.

A project initiated by MCC Kenya workers Betty and Bill Baumann and coordinated by Kenyan anthropologist Dr. Sultan Somjee aims to both illustrate pastoralists' genius and integrity to North Americans and to build understanding between these marginalized groups and Kenya's settled farmers and urban dwellers.

"Ordinary objects: Extraordinary people," an exhibit of everyday and ceremonial objects of pastoralist groups with roots in Kenya, will tour North America and Kenya simultaneously beginning in 1995. Various MCC departments, including SELFHELP Crafts of the World, an MCC alternative trading program, are sponsoring the project.

"Pastoralists possess technology and aesthetic expression that enable them to creatively manage their resources and benefit from the dominating influences of their harsh environment," says Somjee, a research fellow at the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi.

Somjee has worked more than 20 years with material culture—objects whose material, design and use reflect the traditions of their makers. "Ordinary Objects: Extraordinary people" will include clothing, tools, ornaments, furniture and containers.

Somjee has recruited project assistants from the Borana, Gabra, Maasai, Pokot, Rendille, Samburu, Somali and Turkana pastoralist groups and is training and guiding them as they collect objects, stories and photos. "The goal is to help people document their own material culture, thereby preserving it and validating it in their own cultural group," says Somjee.

Another purpose is to build pride and self-worth within pastoralist communities where many young people have lost touch with traditions because of modern pressures. Maasai face the double jeopardy of growing populations and shrinking land as farms and game parks encroach on their traditional grazing territory in Kenya's Rift Valley.

Francis Sakuda, project assistant in the Maasai community of Olosho-oiber, has a degree in anthropology from Moi University in Kenya. SELFHELP Crafts workers met Sakuda on a recent trip to the *bomas* (family compounds) of Agnes and Joyce, wives of influential elders. After enjoying sweet, milky tea in Joyce's house, the group went outside for a lengthy discussion of various Maasai artifacts—clubs, hide scrapers, tobacco pouches, milk containers, wedding necklaces and fly swatters, reports Doris Daley of SELFHELP Crafts Alberta.

Exhibit coordinator Sultan Somjee, left, and Joyce, right, with a family member.

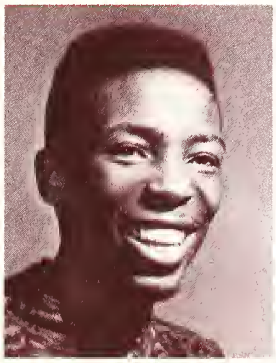
"Children and young men in the family drifted in and out of the *boma*, listening. They later told our interpreter that they, too, had found the afternoon educational. For example, they had never seen a traditional circumcision knife before—now they just use razor blades," Daley relates.

Sakuda says he is learning about his own culture through the project. He says it is important to build appreciation among young people for Maasai traditions that are disintegrating as land is lost, more people move to the capital city of Nairobi to look for work and alcohol problems come home to the *boma*.

"This project is about developing resources, building skills and gathering material culture objects. It builds on human awareness and human dimensions, spirituality and community development," said Bill Baumann.

••• **Cheryl Zehr Walker of Ephrata, Pa.**
SELFHELP Crafts of the World, Akron

Africans as extended family



Africa occupies a lot of space in the minds of African-Americans. Many of us long to feel the soil and breathe the air of our motherland. In early 1994 I had the opportunity to visit Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda as part of an MCC/African-American Mennonite Association study tour.

I saw and spoke with people in the cities and countryside of Africa who reminded me of my own friends and relatives back in the United States. One woman in an AIDS hospital, for example, looked just like my grandmother. I also noticed that our rap/hip-hop music is like the rhythmic storytelling found in parts of Africa.

Africans have such warmth; they made me feel like I'm part of the biggest extended family in the world!

••• **Ron Tinsley of Philadelphia, Pa.**
MCC Communications, Akron

Africa resources

(Available from all MCC offices.)

•••

***Natural Connections*, free booklet of faith stories from African and African-American Christians. Topics include worship and prayer; perseverance in hard times; family; affirming ethnicity; and evangelism and church growth. Each section includes scripture and discussion questions. Ideal for adult Sunday school or Bible study groups.**

•••

***Africa adventure*, children's project, features five traditional activities and five values from Burkina Faso, Lesotho, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zaire. Supplemental resource box includes music tapes, videos, color photos, maps and a book. For free loan.**

•••

***African Tales*, 22-minute video, features three children's stories from Africa illustrated by a Tanzanian artist. Themes include respect for elders, helping others and the dangers of arrogance. Selected by Friendship Press, an ecumenical publisher of educational materials, for schools and parishes, as its 1994 children's video. For free loan.**

•••

***Hope in Africa*, free poster, features a large graphic, photos and quotes. Reverse side gives information about Africa and MCC service there.**

•••

***Peace and Reconciliation as a Paradigm: A philosophy of peace and its implications on conflict, governance and economic growth in Africa*, a monograph by Dr. Hizkias Assefa, mediator and director of the MCC-supported Nairobi (Kenya) Peace Initiative. Available for $5 from MCC Akron only.**

Is God calling you to fill one of these urgent personnel openings?

•••

Georgia: program coordinator

•••

Haiti: country representative

•••

Louisiana: registered nurse

•••

Vietnam: English teachers

•••

Burkina Faso: community developer

•••

Saskatchewan: direct service worker

•••

Cambodia: office coordinator

•••

Labrador: adult educator

•••

Alberta: volunteer coordinator

If you are or someone you know is interested in any of these positions, contact MCC Personnel Services, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151. In Canada, contact MCC Personnel Services, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381.

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LIBYA
EGYPT
CHAD
Khartoum •
SUDAN
ETHIOPIA
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
• Juba
ZAIRE

MCC country profile

Sudan

Population: 26.7 million
MCC present since: 1975
1993 program expenses: $1 million U.S/$1.5 million Cdn.
1993 material resource: $1.5 million U.S./$2 million Cdn.
Number of MCC staff: 9

Some 3.7 million Sudanese require emergency assistance due to prolonged civil war and drought. In the first half of 1994, MCC has assisted Sudanese churches' ministries by supplying more than 2,660 metric tons of lentils, canned chicken and other food, as well as soap and clothing.

Despite terrible physical deprivation, churches in southern Sudan are growing rapidly. Sudanese find joy in worship and are convinced that God will not fail them. "When there is difficulty, then people know God," a pastor explained to an MCC worker. He said his parish had six congregations in 1985; it now has 70.

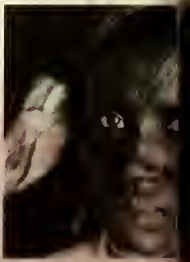
The church is one of few sources of hope and assistance for Sudanese. In addition to spiritual support, churches often provide health and education services and relief supplies as well as food to war and drought victims. These pages introduce several Sudanese Christians who inspire MCC workers in Sudan.

John Malith teaches students to plow with oxen at Dhiaukuei Bible School. This raises money for the school and provides students with a skill.

"God has not forgotten us.

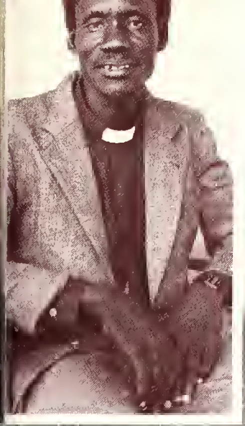
Evil is departing and
holiness is
advancing,"

lyrics from "Let us give thanks," hymn composed by Aluel Deng



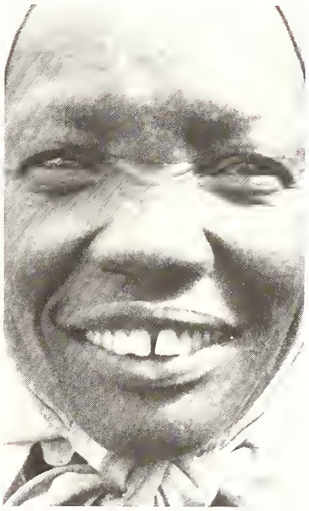
Aluel Deng co
encourage and

Despite terrible physical deprivation, churches in south



When Pastor William Gatjung Lam gives out MCC-donated blankets he asks recipients to donate their extra seeds. He stores these and later distributes them at planting time.

Josephine Akulang, whose university education was cut short by war, helps bind up wounds in war-torn areas.



Mary Acol Deng ministers tirelessly and has established two churches.

News from MCC

* * *

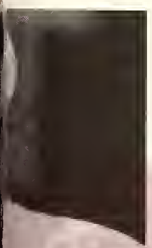
MCC contributed $115,000 U.S./$160,279 Cdn. to Christian Council of Mozambique efforts to aid 50,000 of the 1.5 million Mozambicans affected by a cyclone in late March. The storm struck just as refugees who had recently returned home to Mozambique were set to harvest their first crops. Mozambique is still recovering from 14 years of civil war that ended in October 1992.

* * *

Sixty midwives in rural Haiti recently successfully completed a 40-hour training course sponsored by MCC and a local hospital. In the three months following the training, the midwives reported delivering 74 babies, with no infant deaths.

* * *

Servant Singers, an eight-woman choir from Nigeria, will visit Mennonite communities in Saskatchewan and Cleveland, Ohio, this fall. Nigerian and North American Christians will have the opportunity to learn to know one another and to share how they use music to praise God.



ymns that
Christians.

Sudan are growing rapidly.

U.S. bombs litter the land in northern Laos.

Resources on bomb clearing in Laos Available from all MCC offices:

The Past is Present, a 7-minute video, shows how Lao people continue to suffer and die when decades-old U.S. bombs explode. Tells how MCC and Mines Advisory Group plan to rid a northern Lao province of bombs.

The Innocent, an 18-minute video drama, explores who is responsible for violence and suffering due to war. Takes place in a church where a judge must determine who is responsible for the death of a Lao woman killed when her hoe struck a U.S. bomb. Includes study guide.

Asia Resource Box teaches children about Thailand, Laos and peacemaking. Includes curriculum guides, artifacts, a video with stories from Laos and Thailand and fund-raising suggestions for MCC's bomb removal project in Laos.

Cash projects

•••

(October) MCC and a British de-mining agency are equipping and training Lao villagers to safely locate and explode decades-old bombs that continue to maim and kill. $10 U.S./$14 Cdn. pays a Lao de-miner's salary for a day. $35 U.S./$48 Cdn. provides a pair of protective goggles. $6,600 U.S./$9,199 Cdn. buys a wide-sweep electronic metal detector.

•••

(November) Mennonite hospitals in Tanzania train local people to educate others about AIDS and to counsel AIDS victims and their families; MCC provides AIDS tests. $5 U.S./$6.65 Cdn. buys an AIDS test. $5,000 U.S./$6,667 Cdn. purchases 1,000 tests.

•••

(December) Guatemala's forests are disappearing as people cut trees for fuel. MCC helps train people to construct Zeta stoves that use half the wood needed for an open fire. $30 U.S./$40 Cdn. buys materials for a Zeta stove. $70 U.S./$93 Cdn. covers the cost of a one-week training course.

Material resources projects

•••

(October) Children's clothing: Lightweight children's pants, shirts, dresses and skirts, up to size 14 girls/boys, are needed for orphans and for families left homeless due to wars, fires and natural disasters. MCC recently sent clothing to Angola, Azerbaijan and Cambodia.

•••

(November) Bedding: Shipments to Sudan, Russia, Laos, Haiti and Bangladesh have depleted MCC's inventory. New blankets and comforters are needed; single/twin sizes preferred.

•••

(December) Towels: Good quality, dark-colored bath and hand towels are needed for schools, hospitals and orphanages. Bangladesh, Laos and Sudan recently received towels donated to MCC.

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street
PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500

MCC Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9

Please include the following information with all contributions for Contact cash projects:

Name of project: ____________________

Your name: ____________________

Address: ____________________

Conference or church affiliation: ____________________

Project no. ____________________

News

• • • ▾

MCC slates $2 million for Rwanda

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee has embarked on a Rwanda relief program expected to cost more than $2 million U.S./$2.7 million Cdn. over the next three years. To date, MCC has received $540,000 U.S./$750,000 Cdn. designated for Rwandan relief.

In a shift of plans most MCC financial assistance, personnel and clothing will go to a refugee camp to be established near Bukavu, Zaire.

Originally the Church of Christ of Zaire asked MCC to help them resettle some 5,000 of the 300,000 Rwandan refugees in Bukavu. These refugees were to be transported several miles from town to sites where local churches would host groups of about 500 refugees.

However, after Zairian churches resettled about 1,000 refugees according to this plan, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees asked them to establish a camp for 40,000 refugees on 45 hectares/111 acres of church property near the Bukavu airport. The Zairian churches decided to shift their efforts and asked MCC to do the same.

The first team of four to eight Mennonite volunteers arrived in Bukavu in late August to help Church of Christ of Zaire workers set up sanitation facilities, food distribution plans and other duties necessary to establish the camp. The team includes both North Americans and Zairians.

MCC is also sending counselors to work in Ngara, Tanzania, at Benaco camp for Rwandan refugees. On Aug. 18 A. Richard and Ruth Weaver of Ephrata, Pa., left for Africa; Dave Brubaker, a mediator from Phoenix, Ariz., was to depart in mid-September. They will work with the Christian Council of Tanzania to establish grief/trauma programs to help refugees deal with the tragic events of the past months.

MCC is also the lead agency in a 6,000 ton Canadian Foodgrains Bank food shipment to eastern Zaire. More than half of the food, valued at $4 million U.S./$5.5 million Cdn., will go to the 1 million-plus refugees in Goma, Zaire, where food shortages continue. The remainder will go to the Bukavu area. This food shipment was scheduled to leave Canada in late August.

Don Edkins (World Council of Churches)

300,000 refugees: *Benaco refugee camp, Ngara District, Tanzania*

Inside the news

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Native American Mennos hold largest gathering ever / p. 15

Mennonite World Conference starts two new funds / p. 15

Beatrice church celebrates 50 years of leader production / p. 16

Colombian leader critiques North American church / p. 17

Missionaries inspire youth at camp / p. 18

Canada's Media Foundation is promoting the third annual Buy Nothing Day—Sept. 24. It encourages U.S. and Canadian consumers to *not* consume on the 24th to remind people of the power of the consumer and the outrageous level of consumption in North America. For more information call Culture Jammer's Hotline, (800) 663-1243.

• • •

Over half a million dollars intended to assist needy people overseas "disappeared" when the Canadian dollar dropped 10 cents in exchange with the U.S. dollar. That drop occurred between August 1993, when Mennonite Central Committee Canada budgeted the amount it would send to its U.S. office in Akron, Pa., and August 1994. MCC Canada will still send the $8 million (Cdn.) it had budgeted, but the U.S. office will only receive $7.58 million when it is converted. "The fluctuating exchange rate is one of the realities of life," says MCC executive secretary John Lapp, who directs MCC. "It's just unfortunate that the falling dollar will affect our programs overseas."

Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

Children in Xieng Khouang province, Laos, play on a defused conventional bomb dropped by the United States during the Vietnam War. Hundreds of thousands of cluster bombs were also dropped on the province; some were defective and did not explode on impact. Mennonite Central Committee is helping train Laotian villagers to safely locate and explode these bombs.

• • •

A group of well-known Canadian soloists are donating their time and talent to raise money for Mennonite Central Committee and Habitat for Humanity. The soloists—Henrietta Schellenberg of Winnipeg, Catherine Robbin of Toronto and Paul Frey and Daniel Lichti of Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont.—will join Kitchener-Waterloo Philharmonic Choir conductor Howard Dyck in recording excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*. Organizers expect to raise $100,000 through the sale of 10,000 compact discs and tapes. CDs and tapes will be available in November through MCC Canada.

Peacemakers end fast with letter to Clinton

Jeremie, Haiti (CPT)—Following a week-long fast, the Christian Peacemaker Team in Jeremie, Haiti, sent an open letter to U.S. President Clinton Aug. 4. CPT has placed 18 long-term and 70 short-term people to monitor human rights in Haiti since 1992.

The letter criticized Clinton for not supporting exiled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's legitimacy as Haiti's ruler. It also called Clinton to protect Haiti from exploitation by U.S. "profit-based interests." The letter questioned the need for Haiti's military and called for resources to be invested in literacy, reforestation, building cooperatives and education.

Prior to sending the letter, the four-member team held a week-long vigil in Jeremie's town square. On the first day of the vigil, the team was questioned by the military for holding a sign saying in Creole, "We are fasting for peace, for the defense of life and against violence." The interrogators said the words "peace" and "violence" were political and that foreigners were not allowed to participate in Haitian politics.

Youth shot at Elkhart church

Elkhart, Ind. (*The Elkhart Truth*)—Pristine water washed the steps of Fellowship of Hope Mennonite Church July 24, where nine days earlier a teenage boy lay in his own blood after being shot three times.

On the steps, Christians from one of this city's most crime-plagued neighborhoods placed candles, urging others to "Let Your Light Shine."

"We pour the water on the steps to cleanse them as a sign of God's mercy," said Nina Lanctot, co-pastor of Fellowship of Hope, where the 17-year-old neighborhood youth was found July 15. He has since been released from the hospital.

About 200 people attended the outdoor worship service that closed a weekend festival for the southcentral Ullery neighborhood.

"Our community needs transformation," said Jonathan Brown, pastor of Church Without Walls, a Mennonite-related, mostly African-American congregation. The congregation broke ground for a new building in the neighborhood July 31. "The community can't be transformed without God. If we allow God to work in us, it will happen."

For nearly two years, Fellowship of Hope has embarked on a renewed commitment to its neighborhood. Members formed a neighborhood association to address concerns and launched a neighborhood peace festival last summer.

Hundreds of people attended the second annual festival July 22-24. The festival had been planned long before the shooting that left bloodstains on the meetinghouse steps. The incident dramatized what the church already hoped to demonstrate in the festival's closing worship—that the neighborhood needs its Christian presence to come forward. *Tom Price*

GC board looks at new structures

Newton, Kan.—At its Aug. 26-28 meeting here, the General Board (GB) of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) voted to propose two changes in conference structure.

The first is that the conference shift from the current three commissions—Commission on Home Ministries, Commission on Education and Commission on Overseas Mission—to two new commissions: mission and resource. The GC commissions will discuss the proposal at fall meetings and again at Council of Commissions in March 1995. It may then go to Wichita '95, the next convention of the conference, for approval. If response there is favorable, implementation may occur as early as Feb. 1, 1996.

The board also recommended that churches in the United States form a conference parallel to the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. The two national conferences would continue to "work jointly on programs of mutual interest." This second proposal will be processed with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, the Integration Exploration Committee and the various groups that relate to the General Conference. The GB may then bring it to Wichita '95 and ask delegates to approve it in principle, with details to be worked out for adoption at a subsequent GC session.

Native Mennos hold largest gathering ever

Philadelphia, Miss. (UNM)—The largest gathering ever of Mennonite Native people was held here July 28-31. "We're not just Creek Indians or Choctaws or Navajos," Don Barnhill told the crowd. "We're all part of the body of Christ."

Barnhill, a Creek from Gospel Light Church in Alabama, was one of nearly 300 Mennonite Church (MC) and General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) participants who gathered for the Native Ministries Assembly. Three area Choctaw congregations—Pearl River, Nanih Waiya and Choctaw Christian—hosted the event.

Some participants traveled for three days from as far away as Montana, Saskatchewan and Arizona to attend. Participating churches represent 13 tribes that relate to Mennonite organizations. Joe Walks Along, pastor of Lame Deer (Mont.) Mennonite Church, said, "It's a long way, but we certainly enjoy coming." He described the loneliness of attending church meetings and being "the only Indians." "Here," he said, "I can feel at home. No matter what different tribe, Indians have something in common. We have different expressions from the non-Indian." *Elaine Maust*

Travel fund set for world conference

St. Jacobs, Ont. (*Mennonite Reporter*)—Mennonite World Conference (MWC) leaders are starting to feel "pressure for information," even though the next world assembly is over two years away—Jan. 7-12, 1997, in Calcutta, India.

The executive officers and two North American members of the executive committee met here July 21-24. They talked about the costs of attending the India gathering and ideas for a travel fund. It could cost North Americans $3,500 to $4,000 U.S. to attend.

They also talked about program plans, including a "gathering" in Calcutta and a "scattering" to locations in India and beyond. The "gathered-scattered" model could present some challenges, said Miller. If the number of visitors from outside India is quite small, the two- to three-day fraternal visits either before or after the assembly could all be held in India. If the numbers are larger, the scattering will extend to other Asian locations.

Travel fund: With permission from North American conferences, MWC plans to ask North American churches this fall to start supporting the travel fund. The fund will be used to help Third World participants get to the India assembly.

Preregistration will be available at the joint General Conference/Mennonite Church convention in Wichita, Kan., in July 1995. Registration materials will be released in fall 1995. *Ron Rempel*

Mennonite World Conference plans global sharing fund

Strasbourg, France (MWC)—Mennonite World Conference is establishing a Global Church Sharing Fund. The fund's purpose is to encourage sharing power and resources throughout the international church.

In connection with its 75th anniversary celebrations in 1995, Mennonite Central Committee (U.S. and Canada) will give $600,000. On the occasion of its 50th anniversary, also in 1995, Mennonite Mutual Aid will donate $300,000.

Planners hope $1 million can be collected by the time the next MWC world assembly convenes in early 1997 in India.

Fund distribution will begin in 1997. Suggestions for its use include leadership training in Anabaptist perspective, literature development and distribution, church-to-church relations, activities by and for women, peacemaking and witness, and joint mission projects. MWC will not use Global Church Sharing Fund money for its own activities.

The Fresno (Calif.) Victim Offender Reconciliation Project will offer training at its offices Nov. 3-5 for starting a church-based VORP. A $500 fee pays for up to three participants from a group to attend. Contact Kathy Stück at (800) 909-VORP.

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Goshen (Ind.) College will host a conference, "Anabaptist Vision(s) In the 20th Century: Ideas and Outcomes," Oct. 13-15. Contact Al Keim at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801, (703) 432-4468.

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Unchurched people often complain that churches are always asking for money. Frederick (Md.) Christian Fellowship Church decided to reverse the practice. In a special service, the first 125 adults were given $10 bills. The service had the desired effect—it drew about 125 people more than usual. Only 32 of the 125 people kept the money. The rest put it in the offering plate. (*The Christian Leader*)

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Argentine President Carlos Menem has announced that his government will do away with required military conscription. Mandatory conscription has been instated in Argentina for the last century. Now government officials are working on a new law that will do away with obligatory service completely.

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Nearly 100 Bluffton (Ohio) College football players and support staff participated in the fourth annual Motivation, Organization, Responsibility and Excellence program that began Aug. 22. MORE is a preseason program of religious, social and academic topics designed to help participants in the football program become more responsible members of the campus community.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., will celebrate the successful beginning of its Partners for Ministry fund-raising campaign Sept. 18. Forty percent of the goal of $11.9 million has been pledged or donated through contact with individuals. The celebration marks a new phase of the campaign in which all members of General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church congregations will be invited to contribute. The celebration will include the dedication of the Lambright Center on AMBS campus, a learning and conference center created from a renovated dormitory.

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Mennonite Central Committee has signed a $200,000 contract with the Canadian government to assist unemployed young people in Edmonton, Alta. MCC was selected as one of 67 exper-imental "lead site" projects by the Youth Service Canada Program. The money will go to provide nine-month work experiences for 20 jobless young adults between the ages of 18 and 24. The work will be related to the environment, inner-city housing, human services and community health, safety and crime prevention. The project starts this month.

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The Church of the Brethren decided magazine to become a cooperative user of *With* in July. "We're working hard to provide high-quality denominational resources for Brethren youth," said Wendy McFadden, director of Brethren Press. "*With* magazine is a way for a congregation to reach its youth—to say the church cares about them. It's a way for us as a church to pass on our beliefs and values to youth at an important time in their lives." *With* is a youth publication of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. In 1995, Faith & Life Press, the General Conference publisher, will assume full publishing responsibilities for *With*.

Beatrice church knows how to train leaders

Beatrice, Neb.—Before Mennonite Biblical Seminary existed, First Mennonite Church here began a program to train ministers. In 50 years that program has produced more than 25 pastors and two general secretaries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

The church celebrated the 50th anniversary of its summer pastoral assistant program Aug. 20-21. Sixteen past summer assistants returned to reminisce and express their thanks to the congregation.

The returning assistants thanked the church for giving them a chance to learn the practical aspects of ministry—the way churches work. Dave Heusinkveld, now minister at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind., characterized his experiences at Beatrice as a deep well to draw from when he struggles with the challenges of pastoring.

Many recalled mistakes: too-short sermons, forgotten dinner invitations and children's classes taught like seminary courses. H.A. Penner bemoaned that today no one remembered his sermons from the summer of 1968 and that the students who flunked his Bible school have become the pillars of the church. Palmer Becker, recently pastor at Bethel

Larry Penner

Tools for ministry: *Lee Lever, a summer assistant in 1984 and now pastor at Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville, Wash., holds up the Nebraska Cornhuskers T-shirt that Donavan Diller gave him when he came to Beatrice. "This will help you pastor here," Diller told him.*

Household evangelism

Beatrice, Neb.—Letha Hamm has found her mission field—it's her guest room. In her house on West Court Street in Beatrice, Hamm has hosted three summer assistant ministers, a student from Germany and Mennonite Central Committee trainees from Africa, Dominican Republic, Poland, Indonesia and India.

Hosting so many people has taught Hamm a certain amount of flexibility. The first summer assistant to live with her came while she was on vacation. He'd been living in the house a week when she met him.

"It keeps you from being set in your ways," she says. "You find out quickly that what you used to think was important really isn't. ... My kids would probably appreciate coming back and growing up now," she jokes.

Hamm sees her hospitality as a witness to her faith. She recalls befriending three Japanese students who attended the local community college. One of those students, Miwako Hayashi, became a Christian through her experiences with Hamm and with First Mennonite Church.

After her studies, Hayashi applied to Mennonite Voluntary Service and spent a volunteer term at Pleasant Valley Camp near Chicago. Now that the three students have returned to Japan, Hamm continues to send them the magazine *Guideposts* as a way to practice their English.

Since she first began hosting, Hamm has learned to always keep one room open. "You never know where your mission field is," she jokes.

Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., recalled a Fourth of July youth outing when fireworks accidentally caught a wheat field on fire.

More sober moments were shared as well. Jake Friesen recalled receiving a call from California and having to go in the early morning hours to Gerhard and Barbara Ensz's house to tell them their son Willie had died in an accident at his CPS camp.

Verney Unruh said that in many ways the church was ahead of the denomination when it began the summer assistant program in 1944. Unruh, the first participant, was then a Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., student on ministerial deferment from World War II. When he came to Beatrice, the church had just switched to English sermons; prayers and Scripture were still said in German. Walter Dyck, who initiated the program, did not have seminary training and was the first pastor paid by the church. By encouraging Unruh to study and prepare himself for the ministry, Unruh said, the church was moving toward a more professional kind of leadership: "The call to dedicate yourself to full-time Christian work was a step away from calling people out of the congregation to serve [as minister]."

When Unruh entered the program, no General Conference Mennonite seminary yet existed. So after the internship, he went to seminary in New York City. Mennonite Biblical Seminary was founded in 1945.

Still ahead: Today the church continues to set new direction for pastoral leadership through the program. Pearl Hoover, the church's 1994 summer assistant, is the first woman in the program.

"The congregation has helped me realize that it's OK to be a woman and a pastor," she says. "A couple of people said they didn't agree [that women should be pastors], but I could understand them. Ten years ago I felt the same way." Hoover says she appreciated those people telling her how they felt, and their willingness to give her a chance. And, she says, "When people saw it work, they were open."

Hoover believes her attitude toward ministry has helped the congregation accept her. "I decided before I came that I would come as a pioneer, not as a crusader. I'm not here because I'm a woman. I'm here to be a minister of God."

And she says the church has taught her much about being a minister. "When I go back to the seminary I'll think more in terms of context of a congregation. And I will take with me more of a sense of confidence." *Larry Penner*

Colombians worry about Mennos in North America

Santafe de Bogota (GCMC)—Colombian Mennonite leaders recently expressed their growing concern about the direction of the North American Mennonite Church.

In a May 15 letter addressed to Vern Preheim, general secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church (see *The Mennonite*, Aug. 9, page 12), Colombian Mennonite leaders and mission workers in Colombia stated their concerns about reports of the decline in church donations, changing priorities, and program and staff cuts.

In an interview here in April, Peter Stucky, a Colombian citizen and the executive secretary for the Colombian Mennonite Church, echoed similar concerns. He wept as he talked about the need for North American Mennonites to move away from power to a position of weakness.

"I think it is a difficult time [for the church in North America]. The majority of Mennonites [there] are isolated from the problems," he said. "If you have resources, you don't need God."

"All through Scripture, God is present in the poor, the marginalized of the world. We recognize ourselves in Latin America as being completely on the periphery," said Stucky. "Our voices are not heard. Our lands are there to be exploited. Our population lives in fear. Geographically and spiritually, we are completely distant from what is important in the world — from power, money and prestige."

But "it is precisely in those areas that are the most forgotten in the world where the Lord becomes present," he said. "So the message to the church in North America is that there is only one place to meet the Lord. That is in weakness, powerlessness and poverty. If North Americans can't do that, there is not a lot the Lord can do for them. They will just have to pray for conversion." *Carla Reimer*

Mennonite Board of Missions received word Saturday, Aug. 13, of the death of Allen Martin, overseas mission associate in Brazil. Initial reports indicate that he was killed in his home Thursday evening, a homicide in conjunction with a burglary. Martin's wife, Irene, was visiting family in the United States at the time. Martin was 61. He was involved in theological education by extension, English teaching and working with the Mennonite church in Brasilia.

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The *Jesus* film is now being translated into Low German. Helen Redekopp of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg has done the translation, with Gerhard Friesen of Mennonite Brethren Communications and Gerhard Ens, former editor of *Der Bote*, reviewing it. Planners hope the video will be ready by fall. The film has been translated into 207 languages. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

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Heavy summer monsoon rains in India caused a dam in the Jamshedpur area of Bihar province to overflow, flooding 28 villages. Fifteen volunteers from the local United Missionary Church, which is part of the Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India, have been assisting flood victims. In early August MCC workers toured the saturated area by boat and found flood waters had leveled crops and left at least 50,000 people homeless. Surface water had seeped into wells, contaminating water supplies and causing illnesses such as dysentery. An MCC grant of $7,000 U.S./$9,700 Cdn. is purchasing water purification tablets, a 15-day rice supply for 500 families and tarpaulins to provide temporary shelter for 340 families.

An unknown scam artist, claiming to represent Mennonite Central Committee, is calling people in Manitoba claiming to raise money for Rwandan relief. People can know he is not from MCC because MCC does not call people directly for donations and does not accept donations by credit card. Around $30,000 has been donated to MCC for Rwanda by Manitobans. Around $20,000 came in one day—the largest amount in years. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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Someone broke into the office of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Elkhart, Ind., sometime during Aug. 6-7, making off with $2,000 worth of equipment. The break-in is being investigated as part of a rash of thefts from area churches. A fax machine, microwave, TV/VCR unit, telephone and answering machine were stolen from the office. AIMM made the discovery when they opened the office Monday morning, Aug. 8. The items were insured. Frank Baylor, detective with the sheriff's office, said six to 10 churches have had similar items stolen in the past four to six months. He said there are no leads in the cases. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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A new vision statement was adopted by the Mennonite Mutual Aid board of directors at a meeting in Chicago, Aug. 12-13. The statement recognizes the early Anabaptist vision as focusing on three fundamental beliefs: the essence of Christianity is discipleship, the church is a fellowship of believers, and God calls us to a commitment to love and nonviolence. The statement concludes, "Our vision is that stewardship and mutual aid contribute to the wholeness of ourselves, our congregations and our world. ... Continuing faithfulness in being good stewards is possible only as we are open to God's transformation in our lives." The board also approved allowing MMA assets to be placed in a wider range of investments. The new guidelines will allow investment in international stocks, real estate, and small capitalization companies.

Camp Men-O-Lan introduces mission work to youth

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—S.T. and Metta Moyer. Peter and Lois Voran. Hugh and Janet Sprunger. It's been over 30 years since Marietta Sawatzky attended Camp Men-O-Lan, Quakertown, Pa., but the names of missionaries who visited there from the mid-1950s through the early 1960s still slide off her tongue as easily as if it were yesterday.

"They left a deep impression," she recalls. "They opened a door to the world."

The Moyers, Vorans and Sprungers visited Camp Men-O-Lan as part of a program that continues today. The program's purpose is for campers to have regular contact with mission workers. The mission workers take up residence at the camp, often for four to five weeks during the summer.

Camp Men-O-Lan has had its missionary-in-residence program since the camp started in 1941. Sometimes the camp has invited overseas church members instead of mission workers.

"We want the campers to see missionaries as normal human beings, not overly pious, not unreal," says Sam Lapp, Camp Men-O-Lan administrator. "Our goal is for the campers to see mission work as a viable option."

This approach made a difference in Sawatzky's life. After hearing the stories of Hugh and Janet Sprunger one summer at camp, Sawatzky decided to write to them in Hong Kong.

For three to four years, Sawatzky and Janet corresponded. When Sawatzky was a senior at Bluffton (Ohio) College in 1965, Janet asked if she would consider an assignment as a teacher in Taiwan.

She said yes, and by the end of July 1965, Sawatzky was on her way to Taiwan. She met her husband, Sheldon, there. The couple has served in Taiwan for 20 years.

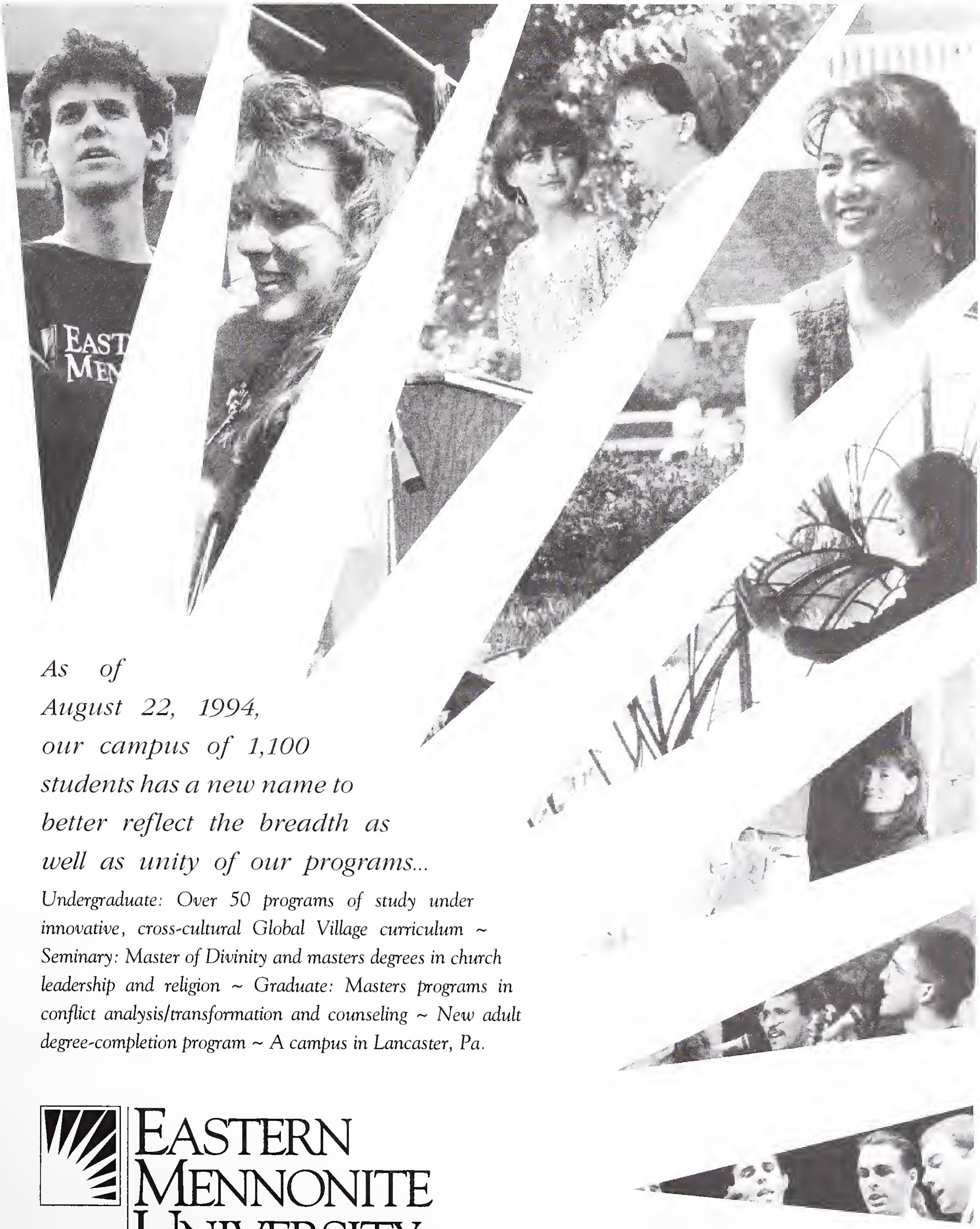
Today the missionary-in-residence program at Camp Men-O-Lan still impacts campers' lives. Marty Weinberger, a 13-year-old, did not have any ideas about who missionaries were until he met Lynne Lillie at camp.

Lillie was this year's mission worker. She had just returned from a three-year assignment in Taiwan with the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission. In her presentations she tried to give the campers "a taste of a different culture as well as some of the challenges of living in another country."

Weinberger learned about some of those challenges when he acted out the role of a missionary who wanted to buy two red apples at a supermarket in Taiwan without knowing the language.

"Missionaries go into other countries and tell people about the love of God. Everybody should have God in their lives," says Weinberger, noting that he is "interested in participating in an overseas mission project in the future." *Carla Reimer*

Sharing stories: *Former COM worker Lynne Lillie shares about her experiences in Taiwan with campers at Camp Men-O-Lan, Quakertown, Pa.*



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MINISTERS

Glenn Horner is Central District conference minister for Illinois.

Cleo Koop ended as pastor of youth and young adults Aug. 3 at First Church, Newton, Kan.

Craig Maven will begin as pastor at First Church, Berne, Ind., Sept. 1.

Bob Sprunger was ordained Aug. 7 at First Church, Berne, Ind.

WORKERS

Adrian Edmiston, Wanner Church, Cambridge, Ont., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Dumagete City, Negros, Philippines, as a carpenter for Habitat for Humanity.

Leonora Ens, Cedar Valley Church, Mission, B.C., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Brazil as a day-care worker.

Rachel Harder, Rockway Church, Kitchener, Ont., is beginning a 10-month MCC SALT term this month in Chad, where she will serve under the tutelage of the Chadian church.

John A. Lapp, Lititz (Pa.) Mennonite Church, will retire as MCC executive secretary in summer 1996. The MCC executive committee has named a search committee.

Mary Ellen Newport has been named assistant dean for academic affairs at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Natasha Lee Redekop, Ottawa (Ont.) Church, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Taiwan at New Dawn Development Center as a swimming instructor for children with multiple disabilities.

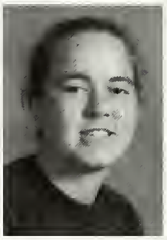
Lesley C. Rutt, Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Paraguay in a shelter for street children.

Leroy D. Saner, Salem-Zion Church, Freeman, S.D., has been named associate director of development for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Lynette Carrie Schroeder, Cedar Valley Church, Mission, B.C., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Brazil as a day-care worker. She previously served at L'Orphalina Caritas, a Congolese orphanage.

MCC SALT—Mennonite Central Committee Serving and Learning Together program.

Ens


Harder

Lapp

Newport

Redekop

Saner

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking a **project manager** in its Information Systems department. The right person will have a bachelor's degree and at least two to five years of managerial, professional or technical experience in application software development or acquisition and implementation, insurance, financial services, accounting or related areas. This person will also have at least one year of project management experience and possess strong skills in such areas as leadership, working with people, communications, planning and organizing. This position may require some computer programming. Technical training will be provided.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. Applicants must pass an aptitude test. MMA offers an excellent, smoke-free working environment and a competitive benefit package.

If interested, please send résumé to **Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527.**

A MENNO Project (Mennonites Encountering New Neighbors Overseas) service and learning opportunity is planned for **Feb. 4-18, 1995 in Colombia**. MENNO Project needs 10 volunteers to work with Colombian Mennonites in local work projects while getting acquainted with another culture and people. This is sponsored by the Colombian Mennonite Church and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

For information, contact **COM, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.**

West Coast church seeks pastor: Established congregation committed to Anabaptist ministry in large metropolitan area seeks full-time pastor who values strong conference ties, biblical study and spiritual guidance, social justice, music, children in the church, Christian education and urban beauty.

For more information contact **Pastoral Search Committee, First Mennonite Church of San Francisco: Dan Flickinger, (415) 512-9434,** or **Ruth Suter, (415) 864-9830.**

Openings at Freeman Academy, a Christian elementary/high school:

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Looking for stories: Do you remember the early days of Mennonite Central Committee? MCC is looking for stories of aid coming to villages in Russia and the Ukraine in the 1920s, as well as first-person accounts of other MCC work in its early decades. They will be used in publications and speaking engagements during MCC's 75th anniversary year.

Write down your experience and send it to: **Anniversary Stories, MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500.**

Asia Resource Box

Asia Resource Box teaches children about Laos and Thailand. Includes teacher's guides, a story cloth, book, game, maps, photos, ball, a spoon made from a bomb casing and a two-part video *Letter From Laos/Taste of Thailand*. Teaches about peacemaking and suggests ways to raise money for MCC's bomb removal project in Laos. Contact an MCC office for free loan.

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Mennonite Medical Association
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Reviews

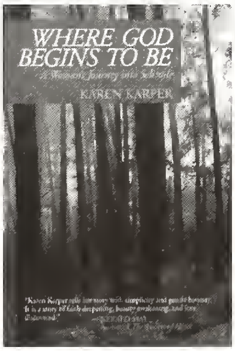
BOOKS

A hermit's battles

Where God Begins to Be *by Karen Karper (Eerdmans, 1994, 119 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor

The title of these reflections by a hermit comes from Meister Eckhart, who wrote, "There where clinging to things ends, there God begins to be."



At age 17 Karen Karper entered a monastery of Poor Clare nuns and lived there 30 years. Then, having developed a desire to live out her vocation to prayer in solitude, she moved into a cabin in the West Virginia hills.

Rest assured her account of this "experiment" is no romanticized version of pleasant hermit life. From the beginning she recounts her battles with mud, mosquitoes, snakes, bad weather and lack of conveniences. But with each battle she relates the lessons she learns and how her faith is deepened in a God who provides and whose love endures.

She tells of her own struggles between her image of eremetical life and the reality: "How frequently I grow depressed when the glowing visions that had enticed me toward hermit life refuse to materialize out of the brushy growth of my inner landscape."

What is perhaps most striking in the book is Karper's honesty, a lesson she learned from trying to write the book. She describes her struggle thus: "I shrank from writing because I did not want to give myself away."

At the same time the book feels incomplete. She admits many of her struggles but omits others I wondered about. For example, she writes little about the difficulties of prayer itself or her struggles with sexuality. Perhaps these areas presented no problems.

The writing here is uneven, and it sometimes betrays a common tendency to overwrite and use metaphors that are either clichés or don't fit. Nevertheless she includes many helpful insights. She writes, for example, "As a hermit, I seek solitude, not so much to be alone as to bring together in myself all the disparate strands of life in our world."

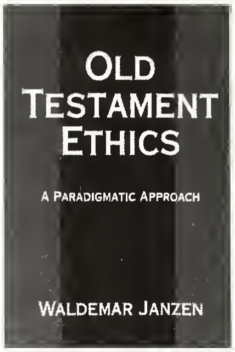
While you come away admiring Karper's courage in taking such a step, she also helps you see that the lessons she is learning are ones each of us needs to learn, no matter where we live.

Images of models

Old Testament Ethics: A Paradigmatic Approach *by Waldemar Janzen (Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994, 236 pages)*

Reviewed by Ben C. Ollenburger, Elkhart, Ind.

As a professor of Old Testament at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg, Waldemar Janzen has earned great respect within the church and among biblical scholars. His *Old Testament Ethics* is the kind of seasoned, faithful scholarship we have come to expect from him. It also represents a bold approach to Old Testament ethics. He calls it a "paradigmatic approach."



An ethical paradigm is not easy to define. Janzen suggests that it is an "image of a model (e.g., a wise person, a good king) that imprints itself immediately and nonconceptually on the characters and actions of those who hold it." We are, so to speak, our ethical paradigms. How do we acquire them? We learn them, Janzen says, from models. In the case of the Old Testament, we have model stories—stories, for example, of a wise person or of a good king. Janzen finds in the Old Testament five paradigms: familial, priestly, wisdom, royal and prophetic. For each paradigm he offers at least one "model story," an Old Testament text that presents a model for that paradigm. For example, Abraham is a model for the familial paradigm, Abigail for the "wise person" paradigm. Janzen's point is not that we should imitate Abraham or Abigail, who did things we deplore, but that in relevant, paradigmatic respects, they are exemplary.

Janzen devotes chapters to each of

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European Anabaptist Heritage I . . June 16 – July 3
European Anabaptist Heritage II. . July 12-27
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the five paradigms, but he does not regard them as equal. He argues that the familial paradigm is primary to the other four, which support it. In a concluding chapter he extends this analysis into the New Testament. I have reservations about the weight Janzen gives the familial paradigm, and questions about his understanding of ethical paradigms generally. But this is a good and important book that rewards patient reading.

Reflections on aging

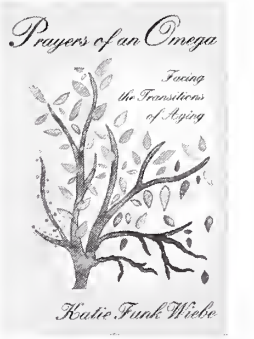
Prayers of an Omega: Facing the Transitions of Aging *by Katie Funk Wiebe (Herald Press, 1994, 112 pages)*

Reviewed by Martha Friesen Graber, North Newton, Kan.

Refreshingly frank expressions on the variety of feelings that challenge the lives of the "Omegas"—the older generation whose parents have died—are the substance of these brief prayer-meditations.

In five untitled sections these prayers talk to God about being older, about relationships, about the days of our years, about illness and death, about reflecting on life's experiences with empathy, tenderness and humor.

Each prayer, introduced with a verse of Scripture, aims to give speech through contemporary psalms to those hidden thoughts and feelings that need to be released to God's healing love—as the psalmists poured out both anger and praise to God.



These prayers help us pray when words for prayer may be hard to find. They are a helpful devotional aid from an author whose writings have touched the lives of many Mennonites.

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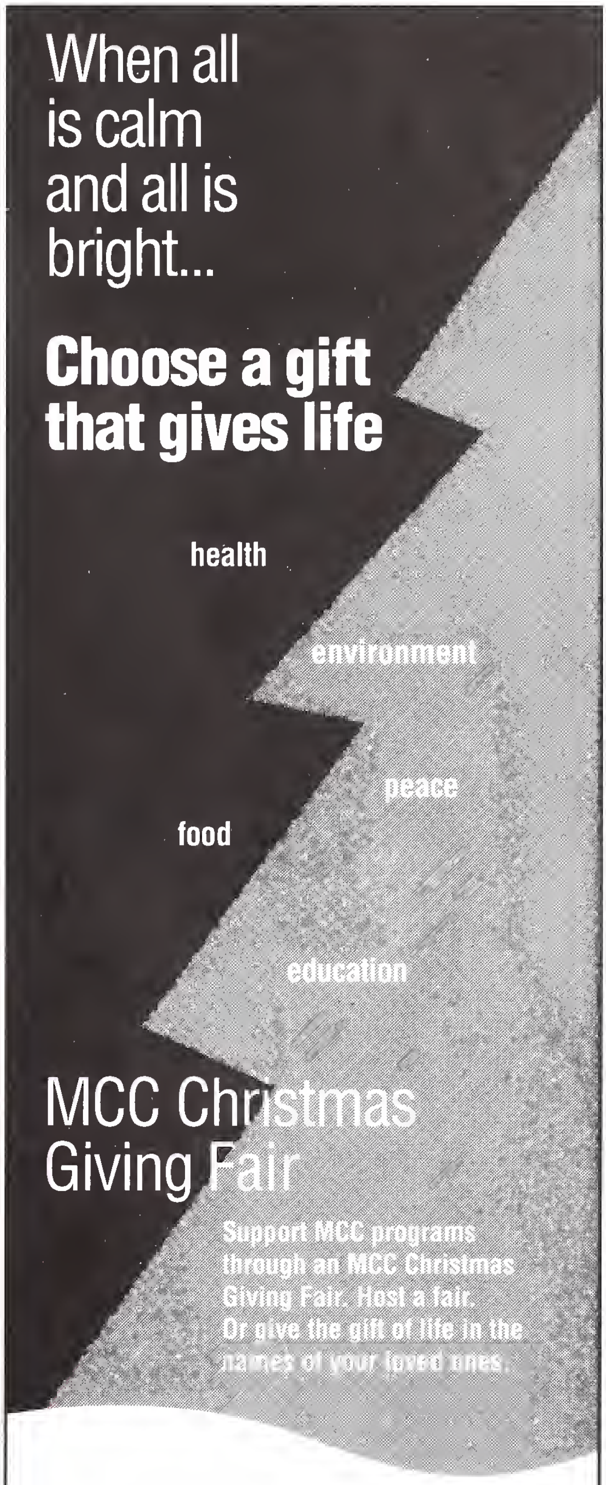

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Editorial

Suffer the little children

If we take Jesus' statement in Mark 10:14 seriously, we will look to children for clues about the kingdom of God. If we cannot welcome children, we cannot welcome God's reign.

On the bulletin board beside me as I write this is a picture of a Salvadoran girl. Taken during the terrible civil war in El Salvador, the photo shows her sitting on a rock, looking up forlornly. Next to the photo is a quotation from Jean Donovan, one of the four American women killed by Salvadoran soldiers on Dec. 2, 1980: "Several times I have decided to leave El Salvador. I almost could except for the children, the poor, bruised victims of this insanity."

If that picture is not enough to break your heart, perhaps reading this issue about the plight of children around the world will. However, looking at statistics may also numb us into inactivity. We must reach beyond numbers and look at the children around us—our own, those in our church, our neighbors' children, the ones in our community who have no one to care for them during part of the day. Welcome them like Jesus did.

> **"How can you teach a child about a loving God when they've never met a loving adult?"**

Actually Jesus' response to the children (see Mark 10:13-16) was a radical one. In trying to keep the children away from Jesus, the disciples were reflecting the typical response to children of that day, since children had no rights and were completely vulnerable to the whims of adults. For Jesus to welcome them was scandalous, but he went further. He made them models for receiving the kingdom of God. Unless we become vulnerable and likewise welcome the vulnerable, we cannot be part of God's reign.

This summer our congregation hosted a day camp for children. Kristin Neufeld, a ministry inquiry student who attends Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., conducted the camp, which was designed primarily for low-income families who could not afford child care.

On Sunday, Aug. 21, Kristin, a member of our congregation, gave the sermon in our worship. She described the plight of some of the children, most of them 3 to 5 years old. She felt pain the first day from how quickly some of these children came to her and felt safe with a complete stranger. Most of us cried with her as she told stories about children who were victims of abuse and neglect. Kristin said she had to face this challenge: "How can you teach a child about a loving God when they've never met a loving adult?"

Barriers: Slowly, over the course of the summer, her constant love and attention, with help from some older children from the church, broke through some of the barriers these children had put up to protect themselves. Kristin became like Jesus, welcoming the children unconditionally. My daughter attended the camp part of the time, and when I picked her up at the end of the day I often marveled at Kristin's energy. I asked her how she kept going. "The grace of God," she said. Indeed.

Kristin's summer ministry showed us that there is a tremendous need for ministry to children. Not a ministry that simply entices them to attend Sunday school but one that embraces them as they are and welcomes them in Jesus' name.

We may read about street children in Brazil, but there are children all around us with great needs. Jeanne, my wife, is a social worker in two elementary schools. She witnesses the plight of children every day.

Focusing on chldren's needs is not only following Jesus' example, it is strategic in building a more just and safe society. U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno has said, "Today's violence is the legacy of three decades of neglect of our children." The U.S. government, which just passed a crime bill, wants to address crime by building more prisons and putting more police officers on the street. A more effective long-term plan would be to address the needs of children growing up in poverty, children who do not have enough to eat, who do not have adequate shelter, who have never met a loving adult.

Let us be loving adults to all children we meet. In doing so we will be following the example of our Lord and showing what it means to live under God's reign. *Gordon Houser*

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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The challenges of pastoral ministry

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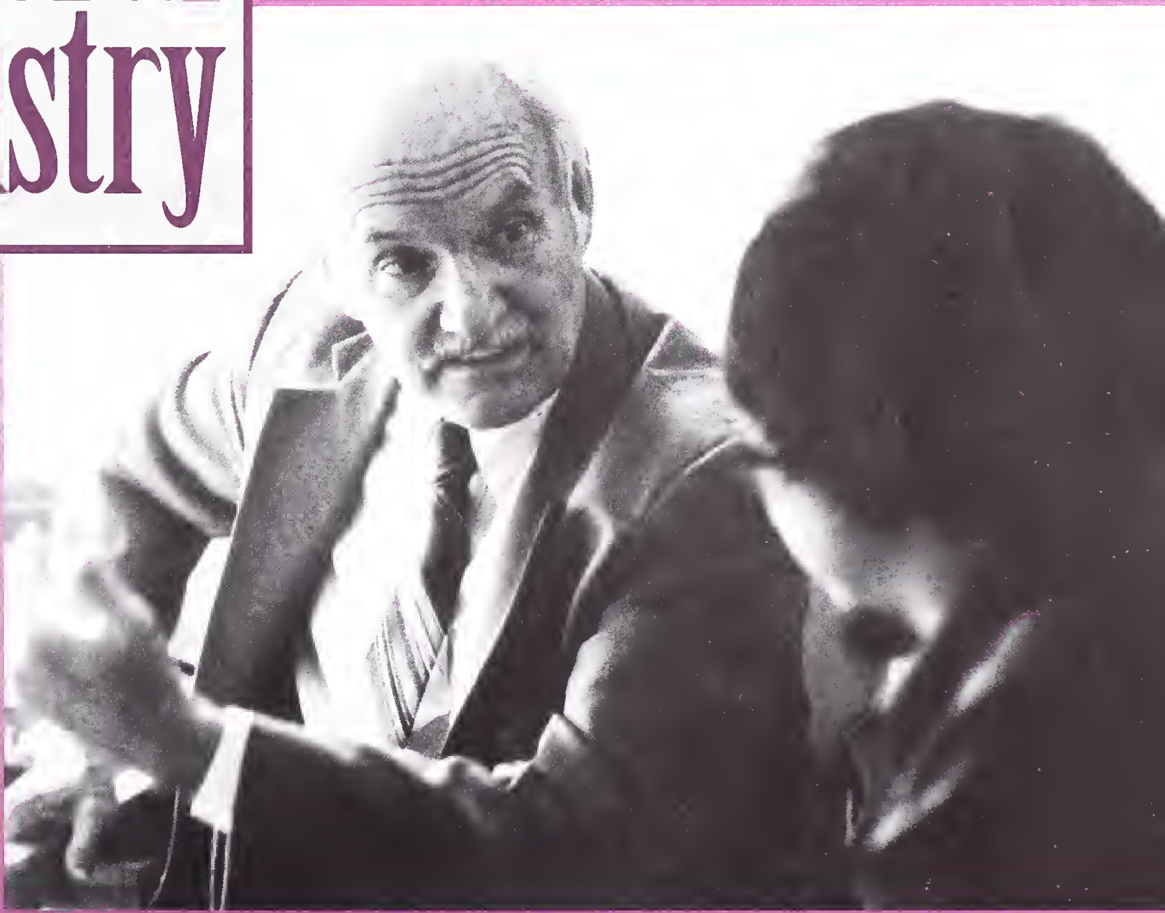

Prologue

We tend to take our pastors for granted. We expect them to perform as we wish, to lead the worship service, offer a good sermon, visit us when we're sick, bring new people to the church and help make sure our lives run smoothly. And we insist they do all this on as little pay as possible.

But pastors are people. They have varying abilities, and they make mistakes. Like all of us, they also need to be listened to, cared for, befriended. Pastors have committed terrible sins, made all the more destructive because of the authority the pastoral role carries. But they have also been sinned against.

This issue lets us get a closer look at some of the issues pastors face, from being forced out of a congregation by powerful members (see page 3) to having one's family mistreated by members (page 6) to the challenges of working in an urban congregation (page 8).

The pastor-congregation relationship is a tricky one, as John Esau points out in his guest editorial (page 24). Pastors and church members need to listen to each other and pray for one another.

The Integration Exploration Committee answers some often-asked questions about the possible integration of two Mennonite denominations (page 12).

And Marlene Kropf (page 14) writes about lessons we can learn from our Anabaptist forebears. *gh*

Next issue: Giving the earth respect

Cover: Religious News Service photo

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Forced out of a pastorate by powerful charter members, this pastor re-enters the ministry with a new understanding of himself and of God's love.

Lessons in detachment

Anonymous

It was late and we had just finished a tense congregational meeting when the chair of the church board called a last-minute board meeting. He announced unexpectedly that in reviewing the constitution he concluded that another member of the church ought to be a board member. "From now on I will invite him to sit with us in that capacity," he told us.

This was a surprise. Not having discussed this, we had had no chance to look at the constitution and consider the chair's interpretation. "It's late and we're tired," I said. "Perhaps we could look at this at our next meeting, so we can think about it."

"No," the chair said, "I have made up my mind."

I pleaded for time and was again refused: "There is nothing to discuss."

Everyone in the church remained silent. I was perplexed by the group's passivity and the chair's unilateralism. "You can't do that," I protested.

"I'm the chair," he said, "and I can do anything I want."

And he was right.

Any church sociologist could have predicted this trouble. Our church planting was young (less than 10 years old) and small (30-some members). I had been pastor for half the life of the church and had been preceded by three others.

My tenure involved many changes: doubled membership, new programs, the beginning of active community outreach and public visibility around social issues. Such changes helped the church out of a serious morale crisis. The biggest change was that our small group purchased an old building, rehabbed it for our use and added a Sunday school wing. Building programs almost inevitably contribute to conflict. Rapid change, even if positive, often brings a backlash.

The original congregation was mostly mature folk, 50 years or older. Newcomers (some converts) were in their 20s and 30s. This compositional change led to adjustments in church life and worship, particularly as we tried to incorporate newly arrived children.

'Unaccountable uses of power': Official control was in the hands of a married couple, the founding charter members. They always held the most powerful offices; he was board chair, and she was treasurer. He ran nominations, and the same folk were re-elected by acclamation. (There was no limitation on terms.) When I began as pastor, they were half the board and all meetings were held in their home. (The board eventually grew to six members.) In *Managing Church Conflict* (1991), Hugh F. Halverstadt notes that church "structures and processes permit and even entice unaccountable uses of power." I have since learned that small churches often have a virtually unassailable "patriarch and matriarch."

The chair had been in charge of my selection as pastor and all negotiations. He and his wife co-signed my checks. He was responsible for pastoral support, called board and congregational meetings, determined their agenda and even attempted to hold board and congregational meetings without me. If there were congregational or pastoral problems, I discussed them with him. But if I had problems with him, I had nowhere to turn.

These structural complications resulted in a power imbalance. When one party has substantial power over another, it is difficult to work on a conflict without first resolving the power differential.

The couple was well meaning and hard working. But they were also

I allowed myself to sit in one corner of a triangle; the congregation and the founders sat in the other two corners. Inside this triangle we fought it out.

brusque and controlling. Their rigid, dogmatic ideas combined with strong personalities to make them intimidating. For my first few years there, I—like many others—was afraid to disagree with them.

Unwilling to confront the intimidating couple, many complained to me instead. I worried that the couple hurt the growing potential of our small, fragile mission. Eventually I interceded with them on behalf of members who felt hurt or offended by the couple. This was a serious mistake.

No one confronted the chair and treasurer for many reasons. People were unaccustomed to questioning them and were grateful for this founding couple's contributions. (They were also the biggest financial donors.) Some feared that they might leave and that no one else could replace them. Others were reluctant to face conflict. Several members had seen another church divide; they could not bear to see it again.

In a board meeting the chair once called me "unethical." This was recorded in the minutes. Two-thirds of the board (everyone besides the chair and his wife) privately told me that they disagreed, that his accusation was unfounded and that they affirmed my integrity. I asked these board members to address this charge. If true, it was grounds for discipline or dismissal. They said, "We do not believe it is in the interest of healing or unity to respond." When I challenged this, a board member said, "We have to be gentle with members." He said he had known the chair for 40 years and that he had always been difficult to get along with and could not be expected to change.

Fishbowl: Eventually I left. For a few months I was relieved of living in a fishbowl, watching every word I said, having all weekends booked, dealing with people's inflated expectations, being the lightning rod for congregational frustrations and disappointments. In my exhausted state I was glad to live without such realities for a time. I also realized that I have many skills and talents, that I could enjoy other work and be happy without pastoring.

I hold my current position more lightly. This makes me a less anxious and, ironically, a better pastor. If someone threatens my job, I recall my freedom from needing to be a pastor,

I do not need to win God's love; I only need to live it.

RNS

I now define my role and express myself without worrying what others may think of me.

and avoid panic. Detached from worries about remaining a pastor, I am more effective.

I now define my role and express myself without worrying what others may think of me. In early negotiations with my current congregation I was clear about expectations and limitations and raised some "sticky issues," whereas in negotiations with my previous congregation I had avoided clarity.

In my contractual negotiations after accepting the current call, I learned that the pastor's salary is set by the treasurer and pastor by referring to denominational guidelines. I noted that even with the guidelines, areas would need interpretation, and to have the person primarily concerned with finances make those decisions is awkward at best. The negotiating team agreed to change the procedure; now decisions are made by a committee consisting of the board chair, the treasurer, the chair of the pastoral support committee and me.

In the earlier conflict I allowed myself to sit in one corner of a triangle; the congregation and the founders sat in the other two corners. Inside this triangle we fought it out. I now know this to be a classic error. Not only ineffective, this triangling added to stress.

Having since studied family-of-origin theory, I see my tendency (like many pastors) to be triangled as a rescuer for victims against persecutors. Now when I feel a "rescuing urge" I stand back and reflect before deciding on whether to intervene. Once I took responsibility for the smoothness of most or all church relationships, even intervening and trying to patch things up when not invited. Now, even when *invited* to intervene, I prefer other means.

A person I counsel complained about a member's off-hand remarks to my counselee's son. He was hurt by how he perceived the remarks affected his son, even though the boy denied feeling offended. I listened carefully and helped identify concerns. Then I encouraged the counselee to speak directly with the member. At first unwilling, he finally agreed and took responsibility for the problem.

At a recent annual meeting, someone raised a concern about the length of worship services. It felt like a criticism of me. (Services, I learned, never ran overtime during the past two decades under the past two pastors.) My pulse quickened and my skin flushed. But rather than blurt a response, I waited, listened and reflected on why I felt compelled to react. There was a good group discussion, and then I did not need to respond.

A major part of growing is becoming more conscious of and more responsible for ourselves, our actions and emotions. I nurture self-awareness by regularly meeting with a spiritual director, writing in a journal, praying and meditating daily, going on retreats, paying attention to dreams and working with mentors.

There is one other thing I have learned that I hesitate to name since it seems so obvious and I have always claimed to know it: I came to a deep realization of God's love.

Conversion: A new friend, Mike, was a university professor. In his late 40s, he was doing well in a successful career with a secure future, but he felt dissatisfied and unfulfilled. He took a sabbatical and studied at seminary. That year was so important that he resigned his tenured position, completed his degree and has since taken a country church. At seminary he learned how much God loves him. All of his studies, biblical work, prayer life, counseling and worship led to a new conversion. Before, he was motivated by guilt, rules and shame; he had an intrinsically negative view of God. But at seminary he saw how much God loved him and even delighted in him.

Another new friend, Don, taught me a similar lesson. He is 30 years my senior with a wealth of ministry experience. We met providentially as the conflict in my former church was unfolding. A mentor, he walked with me in empathetic ways during my difficult days because years ago he had been through a similar crisis. He had overworked, had been unable to deal effectively with a looming church problem and had neglected his family. His struggles had increased, and he left his job. He entered a recovery program to deal with his workaholism. He lost vitality for ministry and had to either face the truth about himself or continue to ignore it.

In the recovery program he realized he had never lost his place before God. God had always loved him and still did. Don may have violated his relationship with God and others, but God still held him in loving tenderness. Don may have gone astray, but he still felt God's loving embrace. He is a pastor again, living and working from the perspective of God's great grace and love. He is much more effective. He still makes mistakes and still struggles but has come a long way. He knows that God's living grace is the only sure foundation for ministry.

Much of my previous ministry was based on something other than love. I worked hard to please God as if to win salvation. But ministry is a grateful response to God's love. I do not need to win God's love; I only need to live it.

It seems ironic that my bitter failure better enabled my ministry. Perhaps I should not be surprised. As Paul learned long ago, God's grace is sufficient, for his power is perfected in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).

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The author is a Mennonite pastor.

The way churches treat their pastors is not always 'family friendly'

7 ways to support your pastor

Anonymous

My spouse and I recently celebrated our 28th wedding anniversary. Today I am wondering if our marriage will survive another year. The thought of separation brings knots to my stomach and tears to my eyes. It's not really what I want, but I also do not want to go on this way. Our marriage, like all marriages, has had difficult times as well as joyous ones. However, there is an area that seems to produce more hurdles than we have resources or creativity to deal with. It's our church. My spouse is a pastor.

The demands of the church are so great that it seems to be sucking the life out of our marriage. Each facet of the church's life brings new challenges for the pastor and the marital relationship. Some individuals in the church seem ignorant of the stress their demands make on the pastor and on the pastor's family. Others are oblivious to the effects of their demands. Still others think the pastor should be available to them 24 hours a day, 365 days a year—after all, that's the pastor's job.

However, I believe most people in the church want to be supportive of the pastor and the pastor's family. The following suggestions are ways to demonstrate support and limit stress in your pastor's life.

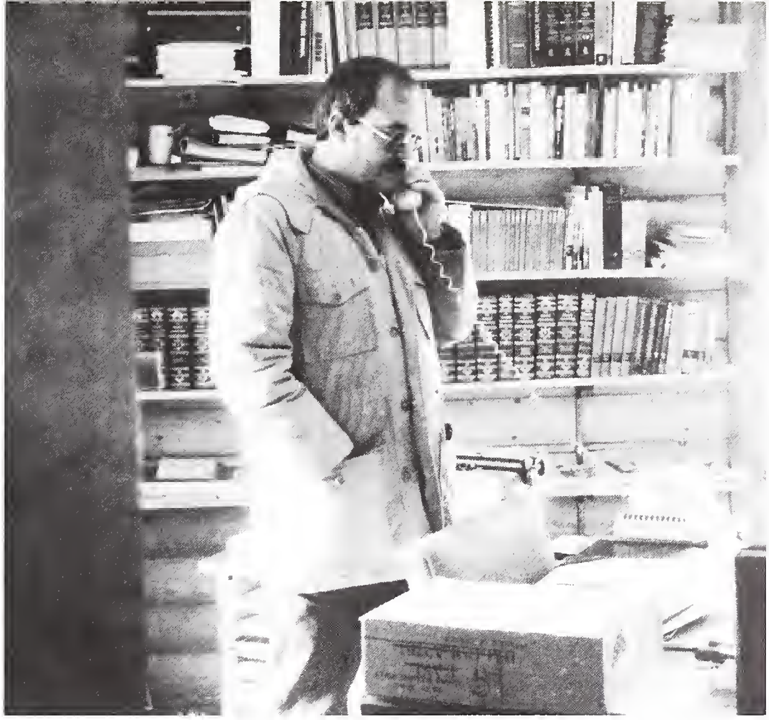
1 Pray for your pastor and your pastor's family. Pray for God's strength and guidance for them each new day. Pray for love, understanding, patience, tolerance and grace to be bountiful in their lives together. Pray for friends with whom they can share their lives deeply and openly.

2 Be realistic in your expectations of the pastor. No person can meet all the needs of the church. No one has all the gifts or strengths, time or energy to do everything that needs to be done in the church. Consider how many hours are realistic to expect your pastor to spend "on the job" each week. Does your church provide a written job description delineating and prioritizing the responsibilities and tasks of the pastor? If so, is this job description used to evaluate and provide feedback to your pastor annually? If not, why not prepare such a tool? It will bring clarity for both the pastor and the church.

3 Call your pastor's home ONLY if it is an emergency or you have no other alternatives. Often meals are the only time, in a given day, pastors have with their families. Holidays are joyfully anticipated by pastors and their families just as they are in other families. Before calling consider the subject you feel you need to discuss. How urgent is it? Is this a crisis or is this just the time you remembered the problem? Is it a problem that needs an immediate solution? Have you brainstormed possible solutions, weighed options, narrowed choices? Have you considered whose responsibility it is?

4 Call the pastor's office first. The pastor is in and out of the office at all hours of the day and night. Use this as your first source of contact. If you feel your subject is urgent, try the pastor's home. But remember, the pastor's spouse and family members are not extensions of the pastor, are not church employees and are not an answering service for the pastor. Don't expect the family to know where the pastor is at all times, to find solutions to your problems or to take messages other than to return your call.

5 Meet with the pastor during the pastor's "office hours." Do you work 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays? If not, consider arranging an appointment with the pastor during this time rather than during the evening or on a weekend. If you do work days, can



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you arrange with your employer to take an early or late lunch and use that time for an appointment with your pastor? Are there other options you can consider for appointment times? How do you arrange to see your dentist or other health-care provider for routine care? Or what kind of arrangements would you make at work if you needed to see an accountant or an attorney? Don't expect the pastor to meet with you on the pastor's day off (often Monday) because you don't want to drive back into town on Tuesday.

6 Treat the pastor's spouse and family members as you would other members of the congregation. They are people with names and lives of their own. Introduce them by name and not by their relationship to the pastor. Accept their strengths and weaknesses, their faults and fears, their gifts, their limits and their chosen involvement in the church. Allow them to share their ideas, feelings, thoughts and opinions related to church issues just as you allow other members to express their views. Don't expect the pastor's spouse to teach Sunday school or vacation Bible school, chair committees, play the piano or organ, entertain guests or be at all the church activities and meetings any more than you expect another member to do all this. Most pastors' spouses have their own jobs or careers, many with great responsibility. They (and their employers) don't expect their pastor-spouse to be actively involved in their jobs.

7 Provide your pastor with an equitable salary and benefit package. Most pastors today have at least one master's degree. Many have several years of pastoral experience. These qualifications need to be recognized and reflected in the salary. As in other families, pastors have both current and future needs. (Don't forget college educations for the pastor's children—possibly at a private church-related school, and don't forget the pastor's retirement needs.) The pastor's salary and benefit package should be comparable to the salaries of the upper third of the congregation.

The demands of the church are so great that it seems to be sucking the life out of our marriage.

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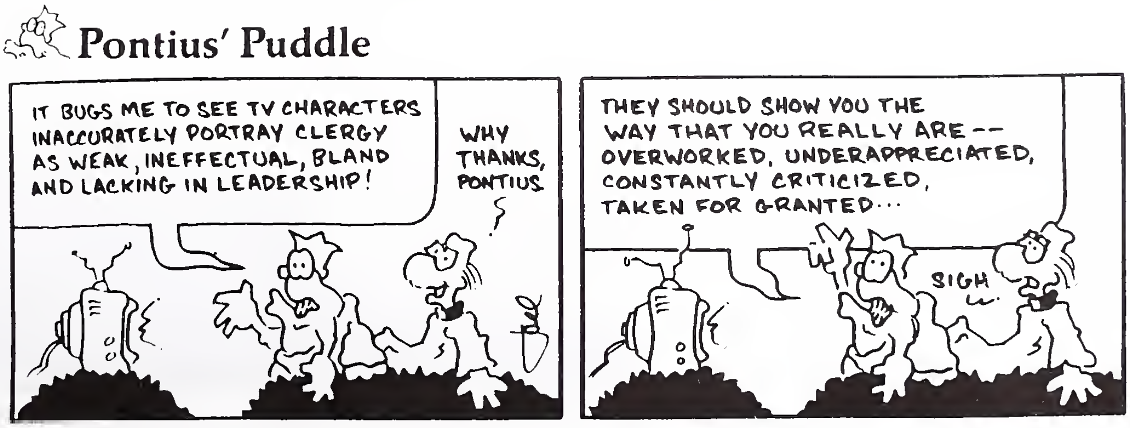
These suggestions will not solve all the problems in a pastor-spouse relationship. They may, however, diminish the stress and increase energy and time for other activities. They may also help stem the tide of pastors leaving the church for less demanding, higher-paying, more "family-friendly" jobs.

Pontius' Puddle


IT BUGS ME TO SEE TV CHARACTERS INACCURATELY PORTRAY CLERGY AS WEAK, INEFFECTUAL, BLAND AND LACKING IN LEADERSHIP!
WHY THANKS, PONTIUS.
THEY SHOULD SHOW YOU THE WAY THAT YOU REALLY ARE -- OVERWORKED, UNDERAPPRECIATED, CONSTANTLY CRITICIZED, TAKEN FOR GRANTED...
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The making of an urban pastor

An interview with Seattle pastor Mary Berkshire Stueben

Mary Berkshire Stueben describes her involvement with the Seattle Mennonite Church as a "strange metamorphosis." She started as the office coordinator in 1989. Then she was a co-pastor with Steve Ratzlaff. When Ratzlaff left two years ago, she became the sole pastor.

She thinks of herself as different from "the standard model" of a Mennonite pastor, pointing to her gender and big earrings as proof. "The last time I attended the Mennonite congregation where my mother grew up, the women were on one side of the church and the men on the other. My mother and I were about the only women there who weren't wearing coverings. That's not a generation ago, that's now," she says. "Certainly that congregation wouldn't have a woman minister."

Stueben was sure she would end up in Chicago after she graduated with a Master of Divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., in 1984. There she hoped to "evangelize all the well-educated whites who wanted some sense of the spiritual in their lives but thought Christianity wasn't the answer." Instead, her first pastorate was in Spokane, Wash.

There is a temptation, she says, to treat genealogy as religion in some Mennonite circles. "I am a second-generation Mennonite. We have to be careful that we don't say, 'Here is this 16th-century tradition that we have and that you can never truly have.' I claim it as my own, even though my maiden name is British. I had to marry a German Lutheran to blend," she says with a laugh.

In the following interview, Carla Reimer, news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church, talks with Mary about the challenges of her work as a three-quarter-time pastor of the Seattle Mennonite Church. The congregation, with about 150 members, relates to the Pacific Northwest Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

Do you know why you wanted to be a pastor?

I felt a sense of calling around the time I was 15. There was something about the gathered church community that was so powerful for me and so much an experience of the presence of

Carla Reimer

A job that will never be done: *Mary*

Christ—a tangible kind of thing. In many ways, my commitment to Christ and my call to the ministry were all part and parcel of each other.

At that age, speaking in public was difficult for me because I was shy, introverted. I went through this initial stage where I prayed, "Let me go be a medical missionary or let me go work in a prison—just don't make me stand up and preach." It wasn't until age 17 that I finally thought, All right, if you want me to be a pastor, I'll be a pastor. And then I had this sense of peace.

What have you learned from your work as a pastor?

I've learned to recognize my strengths and limitations on a personal level and also as a pastor. It's really important to learn what your limits are because pastoring is a job that will never be finished. That is true of pastoring in general but particularly in a city where you have so many people and so many problems. If I think I'm done, I've misled myself. So you need to learn as a pastor to live in a state of always being undone.

Quilting is what I do to keep my sanity in the midst of pastoring. I can spend a couple of hours at a quilting frame and see the results. Talking with other pastors, they say, "You know, you may never see the effects of your ministry on a person's life."

So you need to find a source of strength that does not depend upon seeing regular results of what you do with your energy. Some days I feel good about that and other days I feel like there have to be easier ways to earn $20,000 a year—something that would have a start and an end to a workday, something with clear boundaries and definitions.

Most pastors don't have anything that looks like an actual job description. And even if you have a job description, people still bring their expectations based on their past experiences. It is difficult to be able to find your spiritual center and maintain that in the midst of an Alice-in-Wonderland environment.

How would you describe the people who attend Seattle Mennonite Church?

A number of the people who live here came for work reasons. It's a group that is well-educated; 40 percent have master's degrees or beyond.

Many of the folks want to have a relationship with God and to participate in a congregational community. Yet they are fearful that they will fall into the same controlling kind of traps they experienced in their childhood churches.

You've heard of the movement called Adult Children of Alcoholics? I talk about adult children of abusive churches. We have members who grew up in churches with a particularly legalistic approach to ethics and behavior that was destructive.

This influences how I preach and how I lead worship. I don't usually use the word sin because when people hear the word they quit listening. I tend to talk more about brokenness. What is it that breaks God's shalom? I think that is a way of conceptualizing sin that people here are more able to grab hold of.

What are some of the issues the congregation faces?

Since our congregation planted the Evergreen Mennonite Church three years ago, we have no members over the age of 50. People in their midlife crisis are now the church elders, and they're saying, "We want somebody to let us know that we will get through this."

We had an older couple from Arkansas come to oversee our remodeling project last summer. It was amazing to watch people open up to them, like flowers turning toward the sun.

There was the sense that here are people who have gone through crises

We have members who grew up in churches with a particularly legalistic approach to ethics and behavior that was destructive.

What we need to realize is that the marks of faithfulness don't always look the same.

and survived. We wanted them not only to reassure us but to tell us how we could do the same.

In many ways I realize I am not the ideal person to pastor the church for the long term. It would be reassuring if I were a white-haired male with grandchildren who could answer questions about child rearing and how to deal with midlife issues. The fact that I am in my mid-30s and married but childless and female is not reassuring.

This is a group that in terms of its beliefs is supportive of me as a woman in ministry. But when you're under a lot of stress, you fall back on models you've known in the past. And the models we've known in the past have been exclusively male.

What are some of the challenges you face in an urban setting?

I think about the differences between Elkhart, Ind., where I grew up, and here. In the yellow pages for Elkhart County, you have 25 Mennonite churches listed, and that doesn't include the Amish churches. [The old Pacific District Conference, which covered five states, had 38 member churches.]

Once a month I meet together with the four other Mennonite pastors in the state of Washington. We each drive 150 miles to meet in a town that has two restaurants and a gas station.

I was startled to realize recently that I am the Mennonite pastor with the longest tenure in the state, which I find ludicrous, since I only moved here 10 years ago and have had two pastorates.

Part of what that means is that we don't have the same sort of "learn who Mennonites are by osmosis" that you have back in the Midwest. We have to be more intentional, especially since something like 60 percent of our congregation are new Mennonites.

That's exciting. But we want them to have a sense of the larger Mennonite world, not only what it means to be Mennonite from a theological standpoint. That's harder to do when you have so few Mennonite churches around, and many of these people are not only first-generation Mennonites but this also is the first Mennonite church they've been a part of.

Another thing I sometimes find frustrating is how much there's a glorification of rural living in the Mennonite church. And with that attitude comes both a suspicion and a devaluation of urban living.

The larger church needs to be aware that people who are involved in urban churches maintain a high level of commitment to their faith. In a rural area there is so much social pressure to be in church every Sunday. If your family belongs, you belong.

I think Washington state has the lowest percent of active Christians in the nation. Part of that is because with the Pacific Rim influence, it has a large Buddhist culture as well. It also carries the "go West, young man" mentality, where people wanted to leave the social structures and confinements of the East.

So for people who live in this part of the country to choose to be part of a congregation is a deliberate choice that's not pushed by the same sort of socialization. In some ways, you might say there's a hardier or more determined sense of commitment to faith in city settings than in rural settings.

What factors contribute to "the devaluation of urban living" in the Mennonite church?

When people from the rural context look to the city, they sometimes don't see the hallmarks that they recognize. Our approach to faithfulness doesn't use quite the same language, both metaphorically as well as literally. So the tendency is to see it as absent, that these people in the city don't live as simply as we do.

The ultimate picture of this for me is in the beginning of the film *The African Queen*, where Katharine Hepburn and another actor conduct an Anglican-style worship service, complete with a pump organ, in the middle of Africa. Of course, they also speak in English, which the Africans don't understand. It's the idea that the more faithful you are, the more you become like us. What we need to realize is that the marks of faithfulness don't always look the same.

I think what is important is the sense of orientation. Are we oriented toward seeking after Christ and the centralization of Christ's word for our lives? I think that's the common ground. That's true here and true for Elkhart.

Letters

Health-care reform—yes or no?

Some of the statements in Jason Gross' letter (Aug. 9 issue, page 10) opposing the Clinton health-care plan need to be challenged. The 81 percent of Americans he claims are satisfied with their current coverage obviously have no intention of sharing their benefits with the uninsured. Is this the equality and fairness that the founding fathers of the United States had in mind or that Christians should espouse?

Gross also boasts that the U.S. system is the best in the world. True, it can deliver unimaginable technological miracles if you can afford to pay the premiums, and Yankee free enterprise (with the prospect of immense profits) certainly fosters progress on many fronts in medicine. Experts concede, though, that compared with many other countries, the American system fails to measure up when you look, for instance, at national infant mortality rates and the disgraceful overall quality of child nutrition.

One also wonders where the opposition to Clinton's proposals originates, when economists have determined that a national plan would actually involve a substantial cost saving, compared with the current inefficiencies. Surely Mennonites are not unfamiliar with the proper stewardship of God-given, scarce resources.

The frequently cited figure of average waiting times of 10 weeks or more in the Canadian system requires explanation. If you have a heart attack in an urban area, you are in an intensive-care unit within 15 minutes from the time you call 911; if you require cancer radiation treatment, you could be getting therapy within the week. On the other hand, if you need a kidney transplant, let's say, you and your millionaire neighbor will probably both be on a waiting list, the same list. It is understood that your ability to pay has no impact on which hospital or which doctor you choose.

Our universal health plan was instituted by Tommy Douglas, a democratic socialist premier in Saskatchewan, who used to explain that his mother died when her ailment went untreated due to poverty in the family. He vowed to never let this happen again in Canada. Many Mennonites did not vote for Tommy Douglas.

I would urge readers to disregard the shallow rhetoric and political posturing this issue is receiving, and begin to examine more closely the ethical and biblical dimensions of this difficult decision being faced by the United States. *Karl Dick, Waterloo, Ont.*

I found Jason Gross' letter amusing. I have lived and worked as a social worker (M.S.W., A.C.S.W.) in both Canada and the United States. In Canada we enjoy universal health-care coverage, we can choose our doctor, hospital bills are paid 100 percent, including drugs (when 65 years of age). When we go south for the winter months we are provided with several hundred dollars worth of free medication to look after our needs at our destination.

In the United States there are 35 million people without health-care coverage. In Fresno County, Calif. (which claims to be the richest agricultural county in the world), I found farm workers on low earnings waiting for hours on end to see a doctor, and one not necessarily of their choice. Some had to return the next day with their sick children, causing them to lose two days of much-needed earnings. In Fresno County I found chickens and people together in one room. Even on a remote Indian reserve in Canada I have not seen such a situation.

Recently I met an elderly lady in Florida who after selling her house still had to return to work as a store clerk in order to pay for her deceased husband's medical bills. I am advised this is not an isolated situation.

It is known that the quality of health care in selected hospitals is exemplary in the United States. It is also known that considerable numbers of U.S. citizens choose to come to Canada for certain specialized health services for which Canada is known.

Twice in the last three years Canada has been chosen by the United Nations as the number one country to offer its citizens the highest quality of life. In Canada we do not have 1,500 insurance companies with their executives, who give Mr. Clinton such a hard time.

To me it is not only a Christian responsibility but a social responsibility to help meet the health needs of the poor. *J.J. Fransen, St. Catharines, Ont.*

Thanks to Jason Gross for his letter on health reform in the Aug. 9 issue of *The Mennonite*. I agree. *Harvey Ortman, Marion, S.D.*

After reading the Letters pages of *The Mennonite* recently, I feel the need to respond.

One U.S. reader wrote, "I have not seen a description of the Canadian health-care system," then quoted a Canadian who was supposed to have said, "Don't do like we have; it just will not work."

My family and I have lived in Canada for 25 years. We lived in the United States until 1969. In the 25 years since then we have paid out $33 monthly until retirement. Now we have seniors' *free* medical care, including hospitalization when needed. Information may be obtained by writing Health and Welfare Canada in Ottawa regarding cost and coverage.

Do not trust U.S. magazine articles regarding health care in Canada.

A Mennonite questioner asked, "Are the medical wonders available in the United States also available in Canada? If so, I don't think the quality in Canada is as high as it is here in the United States."

I have lived in both the United States, my birthland, and in Canada. We Canadians have the option to choose the doctors and the hospital we prefer.

We are very pleased with the medical care we have received in Canada. We pray that citizens of the United States will have the same excellent care Canadians receive. *Donald Whitehead, Cambridge, Ont.*

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Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity. Address letters to* **The Mennonite**, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, or fax messages to (316) 283-0454. Send E-mail messages to CompuServe 72147,2746.*

Responses to questions about integration

The Integration Exploration Committee of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) address the following concerns about the possible impact of integration of the two denominations. GCs and MCs will vote on the issue of integration at their joint conference in Wichita, Kan., next July.

Will integration result in a large bureaucracy?

Integration will not reduce the pressure to hire staff. With discipline we can control the size of the bureaucracy. Before 1950, most church committees were working committees without paid staff. The church may again need to find ways for volunteers to do some of the work.

The greatest challenge will be to find ways to work in separate country-wide structures in Canada and the United States and at the same time have a binational denomination without creating an overload of structure.

Some activities and functions now done at the denominational level may be shifted to area conferences. Large area conferences may choose to subdivide into districts. We may need to find ways for two or more area conferences to work together. Integration may result in more area conferences in the 10,000- to 20,000-member range and fewer conferences with under 2,000 members. Perhaps through networking and sharing of staff resources, the larger area conferences will help smaller ones with some overall coordination by the denomination. In this manner one may at least decentralize the bureaucracy.

Will we lose congregations in the process of integration?

If integration happens deliberately, slowly and carefully, we hope to minimize the loss of congregations. Losing congregations or church members because of integration is a possibility. The integrated area conferences do not report a loss of congregations due to this issue. The General Conference and the Mennonite Church area conferences have had congregations withdraw from membership. Sometimes congregations become independent or groups of congregations leave to form smaller units. Some congregations may leave or become inactive because of integration.

Will integration strengthen the mission of the church?

Integration should happen only if the mission of the church is strengthened and enhanced. Integration itself may be seen as a witness to Jesus' prayer for unity. The vision statement proposed for both denominations (prepared by a committee appointed by both General Boards) is a rousing call to mission: to become communities of healing and hope.

Integration should happen only if the mission of the church is strengthened and enhanced.

We should not minimize the potential for short-term distraction to our mission or agencies if integration is pursued. However, this is a time of change for missions in any case—in relationships with international partners, in funding patterns and in congregations' expectations of agencies.

Most denominations go through major restructuring every 25 years or so. The General Conference reorganized in 1968, the Mennonite Church in 1971. In the next 10 years, both groups will need to restructure again, either to integrate or to facilitate cooperation.

The future numerical growth for both groups will be in urban areas and/or with ethnic groups other than the traditional European groups. We will likely be more effective in church growth and mission outreach in the long run if we are integrated into one structure rather than remaining separate and cooperating as we are now.

Will we save money if we integrate?

It depends on how we structure ourselves. The Mennonite Church and the General Conference have considerable duplication in program and overhead or administration. The needs and opportunities for any agency usually exceed available resources. The integrated structures should be able to do more with less. For example, if *Gospel Herald* and *The Mennonite* integrated, the result could be a savings of one or two staff positions. The two General Boards combined currently have three general secretaries. Integrated, however, we should manage with two, a savings of one executive position.

The five MC and three GC church-wide agencies collectively have 104 board members. Five integrated agencies may have 65 board members. With two meetings per year and an average cost of $350 per person per meeting, we may save about $30,000 a year in meeting costs. On the other hand, to establish a U.S. conference like the existing Conference of Mennonites in Canada and remain binational may require additional travel costs.

To prepare quality materials in video and/or print to inform congregations of the work of the church-wide agencies is expensive. Integration should allow for considerable saving in this.

What will happen to institutions like camps, schools and colleges?

How integration affects institutions will vary. The welfare of all GC and MC institutions will be considered. Some adjustments will be required.

If an area conference finds itself with two or more camps, presumably all camps in the area will be needed. The details of the relationship of each camp to the new conference will be determined by the people in that conference.

The need for and operation of elementary and secondary schools should not be affected by integration. In most cases, the existing relationship of school to conference will be continued or modified by mutual agreement.

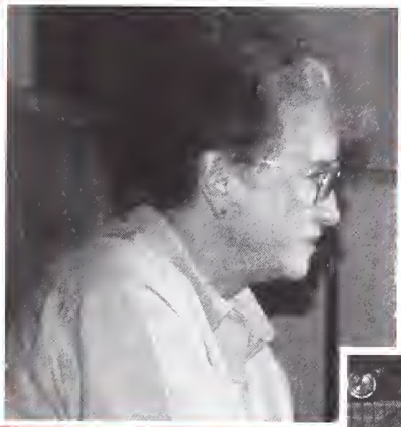
The colleges that serve the denomination will need to relate to a new

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

THE
Mennonite

SEPTEMBER 27, 1994

WINDOW TO MISSION



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I delight to do your will, O my God. Ps. 40: 8

How does "I delight to do your will" get tested when our security seems threatened? Do I delight to do God's will as long as I don't have to adjust the way I do my work?

Is integration in any way part of doing God's will? Is it God's will that we enlarge our vision? Is our primary purpose to proclaim good news? Does coming together proclaim anything to the world? Is coming together in any sense a work of reconciliation?

As I struggle with these and other questions perhaps I should also heed the words of Yves Congar: "the way through the door of unity is on our knees."

Bek Linsenmeyer, editor

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Cover photo credits: #1, Judy A. Yoder; #2, Integration meeting, Downey, CA; #3, Elvera Corben, back, left, works with Open Door participants.

Mission Statement Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: 1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; 2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; 3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; 4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Dreams and visions for carrying God's light

from a talk by Edna Zacharias at the Saskatchewan Women in Mission Spring Conference.

Several years ago my little grandson Derek wanted to walk with me the one and one-half miles to the neighbor's. We walked at a leisurely pace and dusk arrived before we got back home. Turning into the driveway, Derek noticed there was light in the kitchen. "Light in the window makes the house look friendly," I said. A moment later he replied, "Light makes scared go away, right, Grandma?"

What kind of light am I? Do I help scared go away? What kind of light is WM? How do we carry God's light in the fear of this world?

Maybe in the 1990s, WM will have to dream the dreams and see the visions (see Joel 2:28, Acts 2:17). It will take all our dreams and visions, ingenuity and creativity and God's Holy Spirit for us to become an organization that will be vital in God's plan of redemption.

In Matthew 9:17, Jesus uses the illustration of wineskins, "Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins and both are preserved." New wine in old wineskins stretched to their limit would burst the container and both wine and wineskin would be lost.

Our mothers and grandmothers dreamed dreams and had visions that they "sewed up" into a new wineskin called Women in Mission. Their dreams expanded and the wineskin stretched as they used the avenues open to them to support the work of the Kingdom of Christ. And it worked. Millions have benefitted from the millions of dollars and the millions of hours given by women. We still believe in helping spread Christ's redemptive love. We still believe in clothing the naked and feeding the hungry. But times and needs continue to change. Is Women in Mission ready and willing to do new and different things?

Maybe we need to drop something old to make room for new ideas? If a doctor were still using 50-year-old methods, we'd go elsewhere. Are there more ways of carrying God's light? Those dreams and those visions could be the Spirit leading us to new truths.

I have a few dreams and visions. One is that every group would make room for the Holy Spirit to give you dreams and visions for your situation and then give you courage to be adventuresome. How bold do we want to become? How many risks do we want to take? Let's explore some possibilities:

1. Has your group ever considered partnering with a missionary family? Adopt them, exchange letters, remember birthdays, send their children a favorite cereal, learn about their work, send gifts. Have them visit your church

or area when they are on North American assignment. The Commission on Overseas Missions invites groups and churches to consider the Missions Partners Program.* Maybe your women's group could become partners and carry God's light in this way.

2. Perhaps you could take a WM family camping trip. Have an open-air worship service on Sunday. On a youth outing, others joined us for the singing and stayed for the skits and sharing time.

3. In Colombia a group of women from a weekly Bible study spent one day a month to "Go and See." They got the idea from their children's "Show and Tell." They went to see projects they wanted to learn about. We could visit voluntary service units, mission workers and projects on our vacations. Your help may be just what some workers need to lighten their load and give them a new burst of energy. Maybe your group could send a member or couple on a working vacation next year.

4. Maybe we should develop a "women's arm" to MEDA. MEDA is an organization of Christian businessmen helping new business development in needy parts of the world. When it comes to business, I have trouble with a $500 household account. But there are women with such skills—how can they share their skills with WM? I challenge us to utilize the talents of our business and career women, married or single. Why couldn't a woman be commissioned for a WM project and her husband go with her? Women have often quit jobs and gone with husbands to a new assignment. That sounds revolutionary, but this is about dreams and visions.

5. Carrying God's light may also mean helping someone in a time of personal darkness. We all have times when we feel lonely or forgotten or unbearably sad. At such times we most need someone else to shine a light for us. God may call us on a one-on-one basis, or it may involve the commitment from a whole group to help someone back to wholeness.

6. Carrying God's light into the future may sometimes mean being called to be a flashing red stop light. We may need to challenge someone to stop doing something hurtful. It may mean for WM to say it's time to STOP selling pornography, or it is time to STOP sending our young people to war. It is time to STOP all wars so that the children of all mothers can live in peace. Part of our vision may mean coming out of our safe places and being brave enough to state clearly that some things need to STOP.

7. We need to remember that we ARE God's light as we relate to our spouses, families, the people at work, shop for groceries or phone a shut-in. We think our tiny light is unimportant. Yet I remember a night I rushed in from a work bee and we dined on fried potatoes, a bit of meat and beet pickles. I lit one 25-cent candle just as my husband walked in. He hugged me, saying, "This is different." We smiled as we ate our fried potatoes by candlelight. Sometimes we may feel

Continued on page 16

Edna Zacharias and her husband, Art, live on a farm near Osler, Sask. Edna recently completed her term as Canadian WM vice-president.

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*Contact Commissions on Overseas Missions, 316-283-5100, for information and to borrow the video, "Personally Involved: the Mission Partner Program of COM."

Meetings at Crossroads

by Rosella Wiens Regier

Integration is a meeting at a crossroads. It is a meeting of God's people who are at a critical crossroads in the life of the church and the denomination. This image came when I saw *Meeting at the Crossroads,* a book about a twelve-year-old girl who stands at a crossroads in her development. Sometimes this transition from girl to woman is an *intersection* where girls decide if they should be silent in their relationships or risk conflict and disagreement.

How do we as women face integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church? Are we silent, allowing others to speak for us? Do we disconnect ourselves from tough issues, fearful they may disconnect us from those we love? Annie Rogers (in *Meeting at the Crossroads)* says we need "the ability to speak one's mind by telling all one's heart."

Here are some suggestions as you consider integration:

1. **Examine your Anabaptist beliefs.** How do you define your beliefs? The values of discipleship, simplicity, peace and community are critical to new Mennonites. Some older people value language dialects, traditional foods or genealogies. What beliefs are important to you?

2. **Expect change.** Change is part of daily living. Do you pray for courage to change or for patience for slowpokes? The younger generation has little patience with a slow process. We are each responsible for our own response to change.

3. **Be faithful.** Faithfulness to God is central—in our personal walk with God, in our local communities of faith and in the larger denominations. All of us have a commitment to faithfulness.

4. **Enjoy diversity.** New experiences enrich our lives—places, traditions, foods, history. New friends enlarge our world—new cultures, languages and values. The African proverb fits: "The friends of our friends are our friends." There is a richness in differences *and* in our common threads!

5. **Build on the past.** Integration is the opportunity to celebrate who we have been as God's people—sharing stories and photos and holding the memories closely.

6. **Anticipate the future.** What do you see for our combined churches, Sadness and uncertainty or adventure, celebration and laughter? There may be mixed feelings. Acknowledge your feelings and find freedom in honesty. Then live hopefully, embracing new dreams and visions for the church.

*Brown, Lyn Mikel and Gilligan, Carol, *Meeting at the Crossroads,* Harvard University Press, 1992.

Rosella Wiens Regier serves children and six denominations as executive director of *Jubilee: God's Good News,* and two denominations as managing editor of Venture Clubs. She is married to Harold who directs Offender Victim Ministries. They have two adult married children.

Thoughts on integration

by Joann Philipp

Little did I suspect that Friday in 1991 the adventure I was embarking upon. At a WM executive luncheon at Pacific District Conference I agreed to a four-year-term as president for Pacific District Women in Mission (PDC WM). Integration was just around the corner and I would need to bring three groups together, then out of those three groups would come two new groups.

The journey toward integration was really a joint effort between PDC WM and Pacific Coast Conference Mennonite and Southwest Mennonite WMSC's. There were meetings in Arizona, California and Oregon. Numerous phone calls, deadlines and constitutions to write caused some of us to question at times, why integrate—things are going smoothly. We are comfortable now. Then we were brought back to our original vision and goals:

- to better witness to our unity in Christ;
- to strengthen our mission/church efforts;
- to increase efficiency and effectiveness through
  - –better coordination of staff and committee activities;
  - –avoidance of unnecessary duplication of staff, committees and travel;
- to more adequately meet leadership needs through the pooling of resources and the sharing of personnel.

Integration encouragement

by Liz Klassen

Elizabeth Klassen, husband Gerry Steingart and two sons live in Kitchener, Ont. Liz is vice president of Ontario Women in Mission and is currently chair of the WM/WMSC Integration Committee. They attend the Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church.

Integration according to the dictionary means:

- to make complete by adding parts;
- to end the segregation;
- giving full equal membership to all in a group or society.

Is this not why women in the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (MCEC) should integrate?

As churches we became one organization in 1988 and formed the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada. Women's groups, however, continued in their separate conferences.

After integration, a women's committee was formed with representation from the MC and GC women's organizations. This committee has representation on the Congregational Resources Commission, Missions and Service Commission and executive board of MCEC. They plan an annual enrichment day, served on the Women in Theology planning committee and in 1993 hosted a dinner for women attending the Canadian Conference in Waterloo. Such events provided opportunities for women to worship and serve together.

An integration committee, appointed after an integration workshop at the

It was exciting to see how God was bringing people together, strangers traveling similar paths toward the same goals. The lines have now come together. In the short time since integration took place June 25, 1994, in Reedley, Calif., we have felt a unity which only people in God's place and time can experience. There was an effort made to incorporate each other's names—hence, the long names of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Women and Pacific Southwest Mennonite Women. Geographically the former includes Washington, Idaho and Oregon. The latter includes Arizona and Northern and Southern California.

We worked to follow the same time line that the conference was using. Women's presidents were members of the Integration Structures Committees from the beginning. This was essential, I believe, to our success. Also, former officers were included to facilitate a smooth transition to the new structures.

I'd like to highlight a unique feature of the new women's groups. We include existing WM and WMSC groups as well as groups of women that meet for Bible study, crafts, support and prayer. We want to be an umbrella organization to help all women in our churches connect and work together.

Joann Philipp has served as president of Pacific District Conference women in Mission for three years. She and her husband, Robert, worship at Paso Robles Mennonite Church. A retired school teacher, Joann now works at a gift shop.

* * *

1994 MCEC spring conference, compared Ontario WM (OWM) and WMSC. It became apparent that our similarities and areas of duplication were many, our differences few. Involvement of the women's organizations during initial MCEC integration discussions would have made women's groups part of the initial merger. Women's organizations need to be part of ALL integration discussions.

Integration planning meetings are times of listening and talking about what would be the best way for women to come together. How can we connect the whole organization so all women are informed and have opportunity for involvement? Each women's group has its own structure. **The intention of integration is not to change the structure of individual groups but for each group to keep its current structure.** We hope that new groups will feel welcome to become involved, broadening the gifts of the organization.

We are already a melting pot of Mennonites supporting and affirming each other, which was my experience at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate (Kitchener, Ont.). Now as a psychiatric nurse with a Mennonite social service agency and on MCEC committees, I value continued support of the Mennonite community. Our families are integrating through marriage. In which organization does a Klassen-Shantz belong? Should she have to choose? As one women's organization we will build relationships and enhance our work. Integration can occur with a leap of faith, trust in each other and guidance from God.

A brief encounter

by Anette Eisenbeis

One of my 91-year-old mother's lifelong interests is missions—foreign missions. She still corresponds with favorite mission workers. So it wasn't surprising that she wanted to attend a Commission on Overseas Missions meeting to be held in our hometown, Freeman, South Dakota, where many COM workers would be present.

We arrived early and on our way in I recognized people I had met through work with Women in Mission. "There's Jeannie Zehr and Glendon Klaassen," I thought, "and I think that one is Larry Kehler."

In the auditorium I saw Peter Derksen. I remembered that for years Mom had prayed for and written letters to him and Mary in Japan.

"There's Peter Derksen," I said to Mom. "Would you like to meet him?"

Her head came up as she exclaimed, "Peter Derksen?! Yes!"

So I guided her to where he was standing. "Peter, I'd like you to meet my mother, Adeline Kaufman."

"Adeline Kaufman!" he exclaimed. "Wait! I'm going to call Mary!" And Peter went tearing off to remove Mary from a rehearsal. They quickly returned and in the midst of people finding seats and greeting friends, there occurred a sacred moment as these two mission workers, who my mother holds in high esteem, met this humble farm woman they hold so dear. As tears filled their eyes, I realized that this was not just a meeting but a moment of beatitude, a moment of joy when those who had come to love each other finally met.

Some time has passed since that meeting. They were able to see each other again that summer. The letters to and from Japan are even more frequent. And while I didn't expect it to be so significant, I continue to be moved by the depth of that encounter.

Anette Eisenbeis is chairman of the WM Publication Committee. She and her husband, Larry, members of Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, farm near Marion, So. Dak.

Cooperative undertakings

Lois Barrett, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries, responds to questions about MC/GC cooperation.

What are some areas where we are currently cooperating with the Mennonite Church?

The Commission on Home Ministries already works closely with the Mennonite Church in a number of areas.

- Increased cooperation is happening between the **voluntary service** programs of the two groups. Last February, the two staffs agreed to relate as "associated programs." **High school summer service** is already a joint program. Staff works together on recruitment and is exploring the possibility of joint volunteer retreats, promotional materials and policies.
- Together with **Mennonite Board of Missions**, the **Commission on Home Ministries** and the **Congregational Resources Board** (Canada) have cosponsored an annual meeting for district and area conference mission leaders.
- **Hispanic** churches have had joint pastoral retreats and work together in the Associated Anabaptist Group for Hispanic Theological Education (GAAPET). The General Conference Spanish-speaking churches are forming a new association that will make relating to the MC Hispanic Convention easier.
- **Mennonite Indian Leaders Council** (CHM U.S.), **Native Ministries Board** (Conference of Mennonites in Canada) and **United Native Ministries Council** (Mennonite Church) had a joint conference in Mississippi in July. They plan to continue these every two years. Completely joint programming is difficult because of vastly different amounts of denominational funding and differing structural relationships to the churchwide/conference bodies.
- Both Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church representatives work together in peace organizations such as **Christian Peacemaker Teams** and **New Call to Peacemaking.**

Youth Venture Team in Northern Ireland performs for campers.

Does the cooperation work?

Most of the time. One CHM staff member noted that it can be a problem if one denomination shapes a program and only invites others in later. If the program is jointly planned from the beginning, things work out more smoothly. There are many rewards in sharing different perspectives and traditions. Mutual trust among staff members is necessary for cooperation to work.

Another staff member commented, "We realize that each program is better at some things than the other, and we realize that this association lets us benefit from each other's strengths."

Interview with Open Door Ministries Director Elvera Corben

by Amy Dueckman

At the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (July 6-10) Women in Mission banquet, a delicious meal was catered by women from the Open Door. Amy Dueckman, WM publications committee member, interviewed Elvera Corben, Open Door Ministries director.

Amy: How did the Open Door get started?

Elvera: One night 18 years ago, a single mother was brought into the emergency room where I was a nurse. She had shot and killed one child and injured another and herself. On my way home God spoke to me about a ministry with these single mothers who are under such tremendous pressure.

I envisioned this as chatting around tables, becoming friends. Two friends and I prayed together and began the program out of my home after putting an ad in the paper to find interested women. We provided licensed child–minding and a free lunch twice a week. We were going to do it for one year, but the need was so desperate we continued. Today the Open Door is in nine locations in British Columbia and ministers to about 200 families.

Amy: How does a church get involved? How is the program run?

Elvera: Churches have contacted me to speak and become interested in starting a program. We train the volunteers, usually from that church. We're interdenominational; churches we work through include Mennonite, Baptist, Catholic, Anglican and Pentecostal.

Mothers come to the sponsoring church for the once- or twice-a-week session. Their kids go to baby-sitting, then moms can have the morning off for errands, or sit and chat. We have a Bible study, too, which many eagerly attend. Last, we serve lunch.

Everything we do at Open Door has to reflect Jesus. Most of these women have been abused by men so that the concept of "God the Father" is difficult. Society may think of single mothers as welfare bums without value. We're privileged God has given us the opportunity to offer hope and accept them as they are, and that's exciting. We can say, "I'll love you, I'll care for you, I'll be there for the long haul."

Amy: How does catering fit into this?

Elvera: Besides earning income for the Open Door, it's a great education opportunity. When a single mother who's just served a meal for a church group shares her testimony about the pressures she's faced from society and church, and how she's been helped, it's enlightening for everyone.

For more information about starting an Open Door Ministry, contact Elvera Corben, %Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 3471 Clearbrook Rd., Clearbrook, BC V2T 5C1.

Longing

by Jeanne Rempel

It was our second day of meetings and I was anxious. WM and WMSC had bravely tackled other agenda, but we knew integration would be tough. How do two women's groups with so much in common but with significant structural and historical differences come together?

We told each other who we were as organizations, from top to bottom. We talked about what really mattered and we shared honestly about what we weren't doing so well. We dreamed of reaching out to more women to find a voice, to support each other and the church.

Slowly, we started to understand what integration could be about. Integration is an opportunity to address the strengths and weaknesses of both WM and WMSC and to have something new arise that does not forget the past.

The first time I heard of integration out on the West Coast, where three Mennonite conferences are a pittance among millions of people, integration made sense for identity, support and to get things done. Several years and a lot of meetings later, I still think it's a good idea, but I realize it's not as easy as it first seemed.

I long for everyone in the General Conference and Mennonite Church to look seriously at integration, because we do have a lot to offer as a united witness to the world. We need to take all the time necessary for churches and women's groups and individuals to become convinced and enthusiastic about the idea. Given what I have experienced, until a majority of MCs and GCs in the United States and Canada are convinced that integration is the right step, we risk doing more harm than good.

I long for individuals, churches and organizations to take enough time to hear the other's story. There is a reason for each idiosyncrasy, structure and uniqueness. *How can we honor and remember each other's stories without first hearing them—and then assuring each other that we will work at remembering?*

I long for a spirit of honesty from each person about what really counts and also about what has not been working for them. I long for the opportunity to find new ways that will revitalize the church and our faith.

I long for every person concerned to be unwilling to be satisfied with anything less than addressing the concerns of the other. Who can know how God can work if we lift each other up?

Courage and faith on your integration journey.

Jeanne Rempel, president of Women in Mission, lives in Upland, Calif., with her husband, Dennis, and their three children. Their family worships at Peace Fellowship.

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ROUNDTABLE

by Ruth Naylor

Susan Jantzen, Women in Mission Coordinator, invited Ruth Naylor to report on the Women Doing Theology Conference. Ruth is visitation pastor for the First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

From as far away as California, Canada and Kenya, more than 186 people came for the *Mennonite Voices in Dialogue*: *Women Doing Theology* conference held June 23-25, 1994, at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Sponsored by MCC's Committee on Women's Concerns and Bluffton College, this was the second conference for Mennonite and Brethren in Christ women to work on theological issues. It provided a meeting place for women and men who are interested in exploring the emerging theological voices of women.

It was a weekend of scholarly input yet the atmosphere invited open discussion, shared stories and artistic expression.

Participants enjoyed times of creative worship, small group discussions, workshops and caucuses on contemporary social issues.

Friday night's Celebration of Women Artists, organized and moderated by Cheryl Pannabecker, featured organist Cynthia Neufeld Smith, visual artist Juanita Kauffman and poet Julia Kasdorf. An opening night coffeehouse, organized by Wendy Chappell-Dick, provided opportunity for many other women to share a variety of talents through poetry, music and dance.

Five worship experiences were planned by Marlene Kropf and Karla Kauffman, assisted by Debra Brubaker and many others. Anabaptist women's stories from the past were told in dramatic form. In the closing worship, Paula Diller Lehman preached on Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 and affirmed that the time to speak is now. The presence of Paula's grandmother gave silent support and eloquent testimony to the way times have changed. In open sharing that last evening, appreciation was expressed for the large number of young women who had come for the conference. They in turn thanked the older women for their presence and encouragement.

WM made a $250 contribution to the Women Doing Theology conference.

Papers were presented by Dorothy Jean Weaver, Gayle Gerber Koontz, Mary H. Schertz, Rachel Reesor, Wilma Ann Bailey and Pamela Klassen.

Respondents to the papers (in the order they were published) were: Regina Shands Stoltzfus and Nancy Heisey, Fran Hiebert and Reta Halteman Finger and Carol Penner and Kimberly Schmidt. The papers appeared in the April *Mennonite Quarterly Review*.

Facts and figures

For your information we have compiled a brief comparison of WM and WMSC which may be useful for cooperation/integration discussions.

- WM is a network of some 305 groups meeting for study, prayer, projects and friendship.
- WM's $185,000 budget includes an operating fund, WM projects and General Conference projects (see pages 66-68 of *Carrying God's Light: Keep the Faith*).
- Scholarships are given to General Conference women at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. WM also lends support to Mennonite women from other countries doing theological studies.
- *Window to Mission* is published quarterly.
- The study guide is produced jointly by WM and WMSC.

Women in Mission today encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to:

1. Promote spiritual growth.
2. Discern and nurture women's gifts.
3. Build relationships and networks.
4. Support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

- WMSC is a network of some 530 groups, including business and professional women's groups.
- WMSC's $123,200 budget is for an operating fund, scholarships and annual projects. The bulk of support for MCC and the Mennonite Church are not channeled through this budget. See pages 70-71 of *Carrying God's Light: Keep the Faith.*
- Scholarships are provided for women at four Mennonite colleges and two seminaries. Also grants are given to two women in non-Mennonite graduate programs.
- WMSC publishes *Voice* 11 times a year.
- Women's Missionary and Service Commission seeks to encourage and promote SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT so that women will be empowered to use their gifts to build A RENEWED COMMUNITY unifying cultures, races and ideas in MISSION AND SERVICE.

Your Giving

	1993	1994
Feb.-Aug.	$123,360	$88,162

We are grateful for each contribution you make to Women in Mission. Remember us in your year-end giving. Thank you for your faithfulness!

WINDOW SHOPPING

Resources for you:

Just Family Nights edited by Susan Vogts ($15.95) is a new resource from Parenting for Peace and Justice. It contains formats for families or groups of families such as:

- My grandma's grandma—exploring ethnic heritage,
- Family fighting and forgiveness,
- We are a global family.

Contributors are from both two-parent and single-parent families and represent a cross-section of ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds.

Available from Parenting for Peace and Justice, 4144 Lindell Blvd. #124, St. Louis, MO 63108.

* * *

Could your group sponsor a "berry" good night? or a "cherry" good time? Members of Filer (Idaho) Mennonite Church had a fun night when they held a Cherry Cookoff on February 18. Favorite cherry dishes were auctioned off and later shared with the group. Prizes were given for the men's, women's and children's groups. The proceeds were donated to the youth convention fund for Wichita '95.—*Mary Ann Miller in* Missionary Evangel.

Dreams and Visions

Continued from page 4

our light is like a little 25-cent candle, but we need to remember the change our one little light can bring.

8. We must also continue to nurture and be nurtured by the intimate times we have in our groups and as individuals. God wants us to continue to grow as we study, pray and share in each other's lives. This should challenge our ideas. Barclay's commentary says we must take care in thoughts and actions that we are not "hidebound" reactionaries when as Christians we should be gallant adventurers. Big challenge for Women in Mission, isn't it?

But the challenges keep reminding us that Women in Mission can be instrumental in being the light that makes scared go away.

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board of education. More than one type of relationship, college to board, may be feasible with carefully delineated ground rules in terms of benefits and costs of that relationship.

Why are the Mennonite Brethren, Brethren in Christ and other Mennonite groups not included in the integration exploration?

The resolution passed at Bethlehem, Pa., in 1983 by the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church called for the formation of an inter-Mennonite committee representing Mennonite and Brethren in Christ denominations to explore steps of cooperation at the binational level. The leadership of the Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ were invited but declined the invitation. Through the North America Council of Moderators and Secretaries, these groups are apprised annually of the integration exploration progress and invited to raise questions or concerns.

Will integration result in dilution of beliefs and/or practices such as peace?

We hope not. By 1995 we will have a new confession of faith. The committee writing the confession discovered considerable differences within each group but little difference between the two. We will also have a common statement of vision of who we are and what we are to do as people called by God. The research done in 1988 by Leland Harder, Howard Kauffman and others shows that, theologically, MCs and GCs now are similar. There is a growing convergence of faith and practice between the denominations. While there were differences in the practice of conscientious objection to war, this partially reflects the different practice of discipline in the two bodies. Both are fully committed to peace and nonresistance as historically practiced by Mennonites.

There is a growing convergence of faith and practice between the denominations.

Will integration result in a loss of accountability—members to congregations and congregations to conferences? Will the exercise of discipline decrease?

Accountability in the church is an internal discussion for both MCs and GCs. The Mennonite Church has become almost as congregational as the General Conference. Leaders in both groups wish for a greater sense of accountability between congregation and conference. GC area conferences are working hard to develop a greater sense of accountability of congregations to conference in regard to the selecting of and functioning of pastors. It is not clear what effect integration will have on accountability and discipline, but it need not be a negative effect.

The tradition of polity in the two denominations has been different. While there is increasing convergence around the relationship of area conferences to congregations, attention will need to be given in an integrated church to the difference in practice of discipline and the relative degree of autonomy of congregations.

After Nearly 500 Years, The Secret Is Out

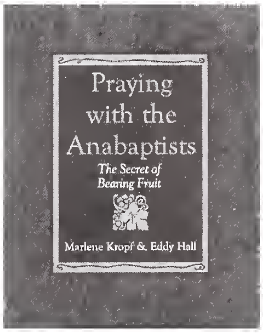
Praying with the ❦ Anabaptists ❦

The Secret of Bearing Fruit

by Marlene Kropf and Eddy Hall

The first book to clearly articulate the heritage of Anabaptist spirituality, *Praying with the Anabaptists* offers fifteen meditations and guided prayer exercises that provide direction for bearing spiritual fruit. Each meditation includes text from John 13-17, a reflection on the biblical passage, words from the early Anabaptists, and a guided prayer exercise. A companion cassette by the Chamber Singers of Eastern Mennonite University includes a hymn for each meditation and reflects the intimate Anabaptist connection of singing and prayer.

"We need this book. It is time we draw on the wells God provided within our own Anabaptist history, heritage, and hymns."
Arthur Paul Boers,
pastor and author
Lord, Teach Us to Pray



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Marlene Kropf & Eddy Hall

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Learning to pray

Praying with the Anabaptists

Our forebears were preoccupied with prayer

Marlene Kropf

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

I wish they would have said more about it. In writing about the requirements for baptism, one of the first Anabaptists, Balthasar Hubmaier, wrote that "the candidates must be able to pray." But nowhere do the early Anabaptist leaders spell out just what they meant by that statement. How could they tell when a person had learned to pray? And how did they teach people to pray?

If we knew how the Anabaptists taught people to pray, we would have valuable information for responding to people's needs today. In a world where the sense of the sacred is rapidly diminishing, many people struggle to develop a rich prayer life. Our intentions may be good, but often we adults are stuck with childhood habits of prayer. Our relationship with God may not have deepened and matured over the years as we have grown and developed in other areas of our lives.

Prayer was as vital as breathing for the early Anabaptists. A quick glance through the pages of *Martyrs Mirror* reveals an astonishing preoccupation with prayer. For example, many of the letters Anabaptists wrote from prison contained prayers. In Holland in 1573, when Maeyken Van Deventer was sentenced to die by execution, she wrote a prayer on behalf of her children:

> "O holy Father, sanctify the children of your handmaiden in your truth, and keep them from all evil, and from all unrighteousness, for your holy name's sake.
>
> "O Almighty Father, I commend them unto you, since they are your creatures; care for them, for they are your handiwork; so that they may walk in your paths. Amen." (*Martyrs Mirror*, p. 979)

From their prison cells the Anabaptists often wrote letters of encouragement to their sisters and brothers in the faith. Jacob Hutter, a Tyrolean minister, was burned at the stake in the early spring of 1536. In a letter he compared the church to God's garden and described his Christian sisters and brothers as "lovely tulips and sweet-scented lilies" that bud and blossom in God's sight. He prayed:

> "O living God, pour heavenly blessings upon the church, your garden. Water your garden with rain from heaven, the comfort of your Holy Spirit and the oil of your compassion. Protect your garden with a fence to guard it from wild beasts. Protect it from thunderstorms and from evil blights so that its fruit may ripen unto many good works. Keep watch until your garden comes to full bloom, and bring it to a bountiful harvest. Amen." (adapted from *Readings from Mennonite Writings: New and Old* by J. Craig Haas, Good Books, 1992, p. 160)

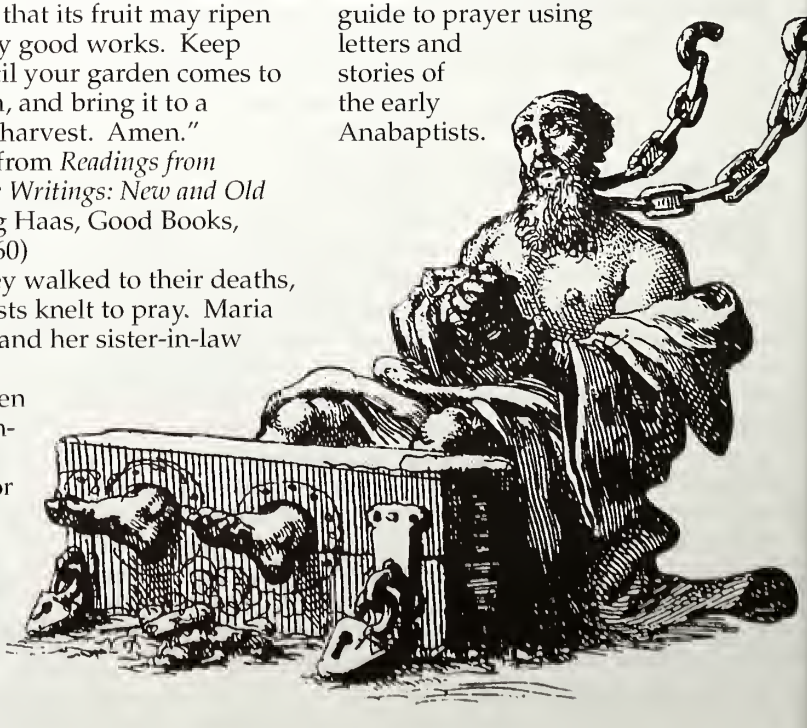
Even as they walked to their deaths, the Anabaptists knelt to pray. Maria Van Beckum and her sister-in-law Ursula, two faithful women who were sentenced to the stake, sang for joy as they went to their execu-tion. At the stake Maria begged the authorities not to shed any more innocent blood. Then she knelt and prayed fervently for those who would put her to death. Her prayer reflects her utter confidence in God's care:

> "To you, O Christ, I have given myself; I know that I shall live with you forever. Therefore, O God of heaven, into your hands do I commend my spirit. Amen." (*Martyrs Mirror*, pp. 467-68)

By the fruits of their lives, we know that the Anabaptists derived strength from their practice of prayer to remain confident of God's good purposes. They joyfully kept their faith to the end. Just how their practice of prayer was nurtured is not entirely clear, but it was a discipline that sustained them in the face of unspeakable torture and punishment.

Perhaps if we knew their teaching methods, we would be tempted to copy the Anabaptists' strategies and not develop our own living relationship with God. Instead we are left to do as Jesus' disciples did and come to Christ with the prayer, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). We can be confident that the God who nurtured and sustained our forebears in the faith will also be faithful to our generation.

P.S. If you want to know more about the Anabaptists and their life of prayer, pick up a copy of the newly-published book, *Praying with the Anabaptists: The Secret of Bearing Fruit* (Faith & Life Press, 1994). Eddy Hall and I, along with a small group of writers, developed this guide to prayer using letters and stories of the early Anabaptists.



Martyrs Mirror

News

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CPT initiates urban violence reduction project

Chicago (CPT)—This month Christian Peacemaker Teams is beginning a four-month pilot project to reduce urban violence in Washington, D.C.

At the invitation of two neighborhood groups, the Sojourners Neighborhood Center and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, CPT members will be involved in establishing a "violence-free zone." The zone embraces the neighborhoods served by SNC and ANC.

Training in conflict resolution and nonviolence will be conducted in area schools and neighborhood centers. Regional Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations will be contacted for support.

"We expect to join together with neighborhood residents to engage in peacemaking where assaults, shootings and domestic violence invade people's lives," says Cole Arendt, a member of the Christian Peacemaker Corps and part of the team that developed the project.

The team will draw on the efforts of numerous community groups. The women of Mothers Against Violent Acts succeeded in ridding their neighborhood of drug dealers by approaching the teenagers with a human touch. "We told the boys we were following them because we didn't want them to end up dead," says Rita Bright of MAVA. "If we had to stay out until two in the morning, that's what we did. When 22 of the hardest cases continued to deal, we sent them letters telling them to show up on a given date to start getting help for their drug

MCC exec announces plans to retire

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee executive secretary John A. Lapp has announced his plans to retire in summer 1996.

Lapp has seen change during his time with MCC. Most notable for Lapp have been the changed view of relief among international agencies and workers, the increased interest in short-term service and the even greater commitment among MCC workers to being open to ideas of the partners whom MCC serves.

Lapp

In the early '80s "we tended to see relief as an interruption to the long-term, more important work of development and the prevention of suffering. Today, however, day-to-day survival preoccupies more and more of the world's citizens. In this context, we—as a church around the world—need to embrace not only development but also the tasks of helping people survive day-to-day."

Today's church members, Lapp observes, increasingly want "firsthand but shorter-term opportunities to serve others. Church agencies can and should welcome this trend, despite the changes it may bring in how we see ourselves and our work."

Lapp says that during his time at MCC he has also seen an increased openness to the ideas and suggestions of partners "in the field."

"We have always responded to needs of those whom we serve," notes Lapp. "That responsiveness continues to undergird our work, but in today's quick-paced, instant-decision milieu, MCC's commitment to consult with our overseas partners sometimes collides with the expectations of North Americans who want us to respond immediately, particularly when a disaster is front-page news."

Lapp plans to spend his retirement years serving the church in other ways, reading and writing. The MCC executive committee has named a search committee, with plans to name a replacement in summer 1995.

Inside the news

Ontario churches find new ways of outreach / p. 16

General Board looks at budget, membership questions / p. 16

Venture project takes youth into Native community / p. 17

Twenty students attending nine church-related colleges and seminaries have been named recipients of Mennonite Mutual Aid's annuity scholarship program. Students of families who own an MMA annuity are eligible for the $500 scholarships. Students must attend a church-related college or seminary, be a member or regular attender of a church denomination that participates in MMA and demonstrate at least $500 of financial need. Preference is given to students who have completed their first year of college or seminary and those who have been involved in at least a three-month term of service for the church.

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A Mennonite Central Committee photograph helped prompt a Somali peace conference held in May. Somalis in a refugee camp in Kenya told an elder that his photo, snapped earlier by a visiting MCC photographer, was displayed in the Mennonite offices in Nairobi, Kenya. The elder set out for Nairobi to see for himself. There he met Bonnie Bergey, Somalia representative for MCC and Eastern Mennonite Missions. As they visited together the elder shared his dream of a conference to bring together feuding clans in southern Somalia. After weeks of conversation, the elder and several others proposed a conference. Bergey contributed an MCC grant of $8,000 U.S./$11,000 Cdn. As a result, 80 elders and 200 observers gathered in Badhade, Somalia, in May for a month-long meeting. The elders resolved disputes so the Badhade area could become safe enough for refugees to return home. About 30 elders then went to Doble, Somalia, sharing their experience with 500 elders at a district-level conference. Now 20,000 Somali refugees in Kenya may soon return to southern Somalia.

Mark Will (MCC)

Elfrieda and Peter Dyck will travel thousands of miles across Canada and the United States this next year to tell the Mennonite Central Committee story. Their trip is part of MCC's 75th anniversary celebrations. Forty-seven years ago the Dycks spent three months criss-crossing Canada and the United States to tell the story of Mennonite refugees in post-war Europe. The Dycks met one another while serving with MCC in England in the early 1940s and married in 1944. In 1945 they started MCC's relief program in the Netherlands. They later went to Germany to do refugee work and helped Russian Mennonites emigrate from war-torn Europe.

• • •

"Restoring Our Sight," a conference on racism in the Anabaptist community, will be held March 3-5, 1995, at the International Conference Center in Chicago. Contact the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Racism Project at (717) 859-3889.

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A Peace and Justice Assembly will be held Oct. 6-8 in Los Angeles. The assembly, "Choosing Peace in a Time of Fear," is sponsored by the Council of Anabaptists in Los Angeles, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries, and West Coast MCC. A concurrent youth workshop will also be held. Call Debra Gingerich at (717) 859-3889.

problem, or the mothers of the neighborhood would stop praying for them. Eighteen showed up."

The initiative in Washington is based on a two-month investigation of urban violence carried out by Christian Peacemaker Corps members Kathleen Kern, John Reuwer and Cole Arendt during April and May. The study found numerous local violence reduction initiatives under way and a proliferation of resources. This new project seeks to encourage these locally initiated violence reduction efforts.

"Our communities are facing a period of unprecedented domestic, community, drug and criminal violence," says Lois Kenagy of Albany, Ore., a member of CPT's steering committee. "Our task as peacemakers is to unleash the power of faith-based nonviolence in these crisis settings."

Ontario churches find new ways to reach out

Harrisonburg, Va. (MBM)—Three Ontario churches are finding innovative ways to interest people in their congregations and ministries.

Community Mennonite Fellowship in Moorefield, Ont., offers free community workshops on a variety of topics in which church members can share their expertise. The workshops, called "Project Bridge," cover topics such as "How to Fill Out Your Tax Forms," "Basic Car Care," "How to Complement Your Child's Learning at Home."

"The purpose of Project Bridge is twofold," explained Willard Metzger, pastor, "getting our congregation out into the community and bringing community people into the church." Having a specific reason to go door-to-door and getting the faces of community people matched up with their names is a worthwhile effort in itself, Metzger says.

In each case there was a small number of different people who came to the workshops from the community, in addition to church members benefiting from the shared expertise.

Brussels (Ont.) Mennonite Fellowship has found an outreach outlet through the local newspaper. The church has benefited from frequent newspaper exposure.

Tom Warner, the church's pastor, says various renovations and additions as well as the church's community-wide summer Bible school program have resulted in good publicity. The church makes sure the paper finds out when newsworthy events happen to church members.

At Rouge Valley Mennonite Church in Markham, Ont., pastor Steve Drudge reports using a variety of media, including a self-produced community newspaper.

The congregation used the tabloid *Together* for a while, then decided to produce their own newsletter, a community-oriented outreach piece. A man in the congregation designs the newsletter with his desktop computer software. The newsletter has used several of the "Mennonite Myth" ads from Mennonite Board of Missions Media Ministries to dispel stereotypes about Mennonites.

Rouge Valley also produces its own brochure, storing the text on computer disc, which allows them to update the brochure quickly when changes occur in the congregation's programs or schedule. They also use the more general "About the Mennonite Church" brochure (from MBM Media Ministries) to complement their church brochure when people want more background on Mennonite beliefs. "It helps distinguish between what I call the other M's—the Methodists, Mormons, Moonies—it identifies who we are," says Drudge.

On their church sign, they place the "About the Mennonite Church" brochures in a box with a lid on it, because people frequently take strolls in that community. One family who picked up a brochure said the brochure was "like an extended hand." The family started attending Rouge Valley, and family members were baptized this past Easter.

General Board acts on budget, membership

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The General Board (GB) of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) looked at budgeting and church membership issues at its Aug. 26-28 meeting here.

The main business of the board that weekend was to consider two changes in conference structure (see *The*

Mennonite, Sept. 12 issue, page 14).

Concerning budget, the board decided to ask its executive committee to formulate two proposals for distributing GC funds in 1996. One would assume the status quo; the other would assume a new structure in 1996. The proposals will be voted on in March 1995. The board deferred to the Division of General Services the question of whether budgets for the division and GB should rise or fall on the same percentage basis as budgets for the commissions and seminary.

Regarding conference membership, the board recommended that churches in the Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest conferences that are not yet members of the General Conference be accepted into membership as a group at Wichita '95. The board tabled a proposal to make church membership in the General Conference automatic when a church joins an area conference, so that area conferences may give feedback about the idea. The board also accepted with regret the withdrawal of Emmaus Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan., from the General Conference. *Dave Linscheid*

Project takes youth into Native community

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—There aren't any shopping malls in Manigotagan, Man. Don't expect to find a movie theater either. For entertainment, you may consider a dip in the nearby river, a rousing game of volleyball or a snack of sunflower seeds purchased at one of two general stores.

Chris Miller, one of seven youth who participated in a Youth Venture in Manigotagan Aug. 14-21, wasn't prepared to encounter such a "simple life" in this northern Native community. Youth Venture is a joint program of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

"It was shocking. I live near a city. You go 10 miles north of Manigotagan and you are in the middle of the wilderness," said Miller, from Smithville, Ohio.

But he soon discovered that he enjoyed the slower pace of life. "The fact that there were so few things to do was a good thing. It was relaxing," he said.

After an initial orientation to Native culture, including a discussion about their biases against Native people, the Youth Venture group spent their time leading Daily Vacation Bible School and helping with various work projects.

About 25 children ages 5 to 12 attended the DVBS program. The youth taught the children a number of songs, games and crafts. They also performed skits that illustrated the characteristics of Jesus, such as healing and teaching.

"Most people have a one-way vision about Native people. They think they all live in poverty, that they all are drunks," said Inga Rinehart of Seattle. But she said that the Natives she met in Manigotagan seemed to be the total opposite of the stereotype.

"I have so much more understanding about the Native culture now," said Rinehart. "I don't think you can be open-minded about another culture if you don't know anything about it." *Carla Reimer*

Put on a happy face: *Kristi Amstutz (far right), Inga Rinehart (front, center) and Stacy Brown (far left) paint faces as part of Daily Vacation Bible School in Manigotagan.*

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., is welcoming prospective students to a "Seminary Sampler" Oct. 16-17, 1994, and March 5-6, 1995, at the seminary. Contact the seminary at (800) 964-2627.

• • •

Mennonite Economic Development Associates will hold its annual convention Nov. 3-6 in South Bend, Ind. For information call (800) 723-7064 in the United States or (800) 665-7026 in Canada.

• • •

A Sunday school teacher training event, "Aid to Christian Teaching Weekend," will be held Oct. 28-30 at Massanetta Springs Conference Center, Harrisonburg, Va. For information call (703) 434-1604.

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A conference on pastoral misconduct and sexual abuse will be held at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Clearbrook, B.C., Oct. 28-29. The conference is sponsored by the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, the B.C. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, Columbia Bible College, Emmanuel Mennonite Church and MCC B.C. Women's Concerns. Contact Miriam Ruiz at (604) 850-6639 or (604) 857-0011.

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Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., has announced its Peace Lecture Series speakers for 1994-95. Frans de Waal, a primatologist, will speak Oct. 20 on "Peacemaking Among Primates"; mediator Jeanne Erikson will speak Nov. 17 on "Dispute Resolution for Older Americans and Children"; Barbara Higdon, president emerita of Graceland College, Lamoni, Iowa, will speak Feb. 2 on "The Pursuit of Peace"; New Testament scholar Walter Wink will speak Feb. 27 on "Jesus' Turn on Nonviolence." All lectures will be held at 8 p.m. at Krehbiel Auditorium except Wink's; he will speak at Bethel College Mennonite Church.

Record

MINISTERS

Floyd Born will begin as pastor at Zion Church, Elbing, Kan., in November.

Iris Hartshorn, Houston Church, was to be ordained Sept. 11. She serves as chaplain to the area hospice.

Helen and **James Reusser** have retired as co-pastors at Mannheim Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Doris Weber is interim pastor at Mannheim Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Arlin Yoder will serve as interim pastor at Deer Creek (Okla.) Church Oct. 1 to Dec. 31.

WORKERS

Corrie Bauman, Floradale (Ont.) Church, began a two-year MVS term Aug. 15 as a child-care worker in Saskatoon.

Carol and **Phil Bergen**, Peace Community Church, Clovis, Calif., workers with COM, AIMM and Mennonite Brethren Missions and Services, returned to Burkina Faso Aug. 22 after a one-year NAA.

Chad Brubaker, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, is starting a two-year MCC term in Atlanta as an employment specialist.

Jamie and **Karen Cressman**, First Church, Berne, Ind., are beginning two-year MCC terms in Belle Glade, Fla. Jamie will be working as a horticulturist and Karen as a health educator and nurse.

Bill Derksen, Peace Church, Richmond, B.C., COM worker in Japan, returned to Canada in July. He will study at AMBS and plans to return to Japan next February.

Marilyn and **Rick Derksen**, COM - AIMM workers in Zaire since 1976, returned to Kinshasa, Zaire, Aug. 12 after a one-year NAA. Marilyn is a nurse midwife and teaches courses through the Church of Christ of Zaire. Rick teaches at an interdenominational theological institute.

Louise Dueckman, Olivet Church, Clearbrook, B.C., began a one-year MVS term May 2 as a clerk at the Et Cetera Shop in Hutchinson, Kan.

Karen Ediger is secretary in the sales and marketing division of Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan.

Robert Epp, Eigenheim Church, Rosthern, Sask., began a two-year MVS term Aug. 8 as an intake worker with Catholic Charities in San Francisco.

Eliseo Franco, Iglesia Evangelica Bethel Church, North Hollywood, Calif., began a two-year MCC term in April in North Hollywood as a community worker.

Jaime Friesen, Altona (Man.) United Church of Canada, began a one-year MVS term July 15 as an assistant teacher at a day-care center in Markham, Ill.

Jeanette and **Todd Hanson**, workers with COM and CEE, left for China July 19. They teach English at Sichuan Teachers College in Nanchong.

Scott Hoberg is resident hall director, assistant football coach and instructor in health management and human ecology at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Neil and **Saralyn Horsburgh**, Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind., began three-year MCC terms in June in Akron, Pa., as program co-coordinators of the Akron service workers' unit.

Garret Hotmar is assistant football coach and admissions

AMBS—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.
AIMM—Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission
CEE—China Educational Exchange
COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service
NAA—North America Assignment
SALT—Serving and Learning Together

Bauman

C. Bergen

P. Bergen

Brubaker

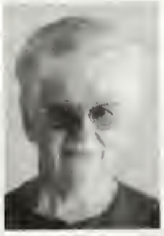
J. Cressman

K. Cressman

B. Derksen

M. Derksen

R. Derksen


Dueckman

Epp

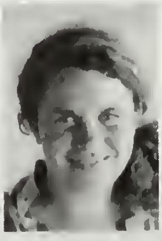
Friesen

J. Hanson

T. Hanson

N. Horsburgh

S. Horsburgh


Landes

C. Leuz

L. Leuz

counselor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Rachelle Landes, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Cheboygan, Mich., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 in San Francisco.

Chris and **Lois Leuz**, COM workers in Taiwan, returned to the United States Aug. 8 for a two-month NAA. They return to Taiwan on Oct. 1.

Scott Lindeman, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., began a two-year MVS term July 2 as a teacher's assistant in University City, Mo.

Erna and **Lawrence Loewen-Rudgers**, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg; Peace Church, Saskatoon; and Neuanlage Grace Church, Hague, Sask., are beginning three-year MCC terms in Nairobi, Kenya. Lawrence will be working as a drylands forester.

Barbara Martin began July 29 as customer service representative for Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan.

Andreas Neufeld, Kaiserslautern, Germany, began a two-year MVS term July 25 working with the Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, St. Paul, Minn.

Konrad Neufeld, Mennonitengemeinde Espelkamp, began a two-year MVS assignment with Housing Rehabilitation/ Sign of the Cross in Cincinnati.

Reina Neufeldt, First Church, Calgary, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Washington as a legislative assistant for domestic affairs at MCC Washington Office.

Lenae Nofziger, Stillwater, Okla., began a one-year MVS term Aug. 15 as an office manager and research assistant for Friends of the Earth in Seattle.

Roderick Peters, Peace Church, Saskatoon, began a two-year MVS term June 9 as a staff person with the Death Penalty Focus in San Francisco.

Terri Peters, Fort Garry Fellowship, Winnipeg, and Peace Church, Regina, began a one-year MCC term in June in Regina as an adult-literacy worker.

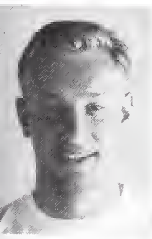
Anna Prescott, First United Church of Oak Park, Ill., began a one-year MVS term in September as a child-care worker in Winnipeg.

Lindeman

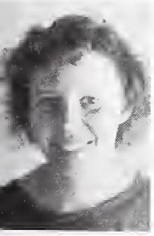
E. Loewen-Rudgers

L. Loewen-Rudgers

A. Neufeld


K. Neufeld

Neufeldt


Nofziger

R. Peters

T. Peters

Prescott

President

The Bethel College Board of Directors announces the search for a president who will lead the college in its second century of excellence. For more than 100 years Bethel College has linked the life of the mind and the life of the spirit through rigorous academic programs and a nurturing community. A distinctive emphasis on academic quality and service to others uniquely prepares Bethel graduates for the challenges and opportunities of living and working in the complex, interdependent global community.

We seek a president who will articulate the distinctiveness and values of Bethel College in a way that cultivates community, builds resources and attracts exceptional students, faculty and staff. We seek a president who will energetically lead the college as it strives to be a diverse community of learners, committed to the search for authentic faith and empirical understanding through programs rooted in the ethics of discipleship, scholarship and integrity.

Bethel College is a four-year liberal arts college with majors in the traditional disciplines and selected career and accredited professional programs. It is located in North Newton, Kan., near Wichita, the state's largest city. The college maintains a residential environment designed to foster integrative learning experiences.

Founded in 1887, Bethel College is the oldest Mennonite college in North America. By tradition and by choice Bethel continues to base its mission on its Anabaptist and academic identity. Bethel College is a self-governing corporation with close ties to its constituent churches and communities.

The board of directors invites nominations and expressions of interest until the position is filled. The president is expected to assume duties during the summer of 1995. The search committee will begin screening candidates Nov. 15. Nominations and expressions of interest should be submitted to:

Alvin I. Penner
Chair, Presidential Search Committee
Bethel College
300 East 27th Street
North Newton, KS 67117.

All applications, nominations and inquiries will be held in strict confidence. Bethel College is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer that actively seeks and encourages nominations of and expressions of interest from women and members of underrepresented populations, as well as from all other qualified individuals.

BETHEL
COLLEGE

Farida Shapiro, Hyattsville (Md.) Church, began a one-year MVS term as an assistant teacher at a day-care center.

Trisha Shepley, Harrow (Ont.) Church, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Curitiba, Brazil, as a day-care worker.

Kevin Smith, Newark (Del.) United Methodist Church, began a 15-month MVS term Aug. 15 as an administrative manager with Habitat for Humanity in Fresno, Calif.

Paula Snyder, Stayner, Ont., began an 18-month MVS term Aug. 15 with an organization in Fresno, Calif., that provides supportive services to families who have developmentally disabled members.

Harold D. Thieszen began as director of development, marketing and church relations at Memorial Home and Pine Village, Moundridge, Kan. He recently completed 7 1/2 years at AMBS as coordinator of church and seminary relations.

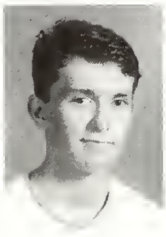
Jeffrey Ralph Wagler, Steinmann Church, Baden, Ont., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Uruguay as a farm intern.

Melissa Waltner, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., left for China Aug. 4 for a two-year COM and CEE term, teaching English at Northeastern University in Shenyang.

Shapiro

Smith

Snyder


Wagler

Waltner

Make your voice heard.

Write **The Mennonite**
P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114.

West Coast church seeks pastor: Established congregation committed to Anabaptist ministry in large metropolitan area seeks full-time pastor who values strong conference ties, biblical study and spiritual guidance, social justice, music, children in the church, Christian education and urban beauty.

For more information contact **Pastoral Search Committee, First Mennonite Church of San Francisco: Dan Flickinger, (415) 512-9434** or **Ruth Suter, (415) 864-9830.**

Looking for stories: Do you remember the early days of Mennonite Central Committee? MCC is looking for stories of aid coming to villages in Russia and the Ukraine in the 1920s, as well as first-person accounts of other MCC work in its early decades. They will be used in publications and speaking engagements during MCC's 75th anniversary year.

Write down your experience and send it to **Anniversary Stories, MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500.**

Full-time pastor being sought by Grace Mennonite Church, Enid, Okla., population 50,000.

Contact **Ronnie Decker, Route 2, Box 97, Meno, OK 73760, (405) 776-2544.**

Openings at Freeman Academy, a Christian elementary/high school:

- **First-year teachers** are invited to apply for full-time voluntary positions assisting master teachers.
- **Repair, maintenance and cleaning positions** are available for full-time volunteers.

Housing, living expenses, health insurance and a personal stipend are provided. Living quarters are located near the school. Send letter of application and résumé to **Larry Horner, Freeman Academy, Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029, (605) 925-4237.**

Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., seeks to fill two positions for its new Information Systems department. These positions are available immediately. Applicants must be committed Christians with an appreciation of the Mennonite context. Minorities encouraged to apply.

- The **Systems Engineer** will be responsible for all technical aspects of campus information systems, including purchasing, installation, repair and maintenance. This person will supervise several technicians. A bachelor's degree in a computer-related area required; master's degree and certified training in specific systems, especially Unix, preferred. Desired experience includes installation and maintenance of varied computer systems, administration and staff supervision. This is a full-time, 12-month position.

- The **Systems Technician for Academic Programs** will provide support for users of computer systems (including desktop and network) in academic departments and laboratories. This person will focus on software issues and assist with hardware needs. A B.A. in computer science, computer information systems or a related area required. Desired experience includes installation and maintenance of computer systems. This is a full-time, 12-month position.

If interested, please contact **EMU Personnel Office, (703) 432-4108.**

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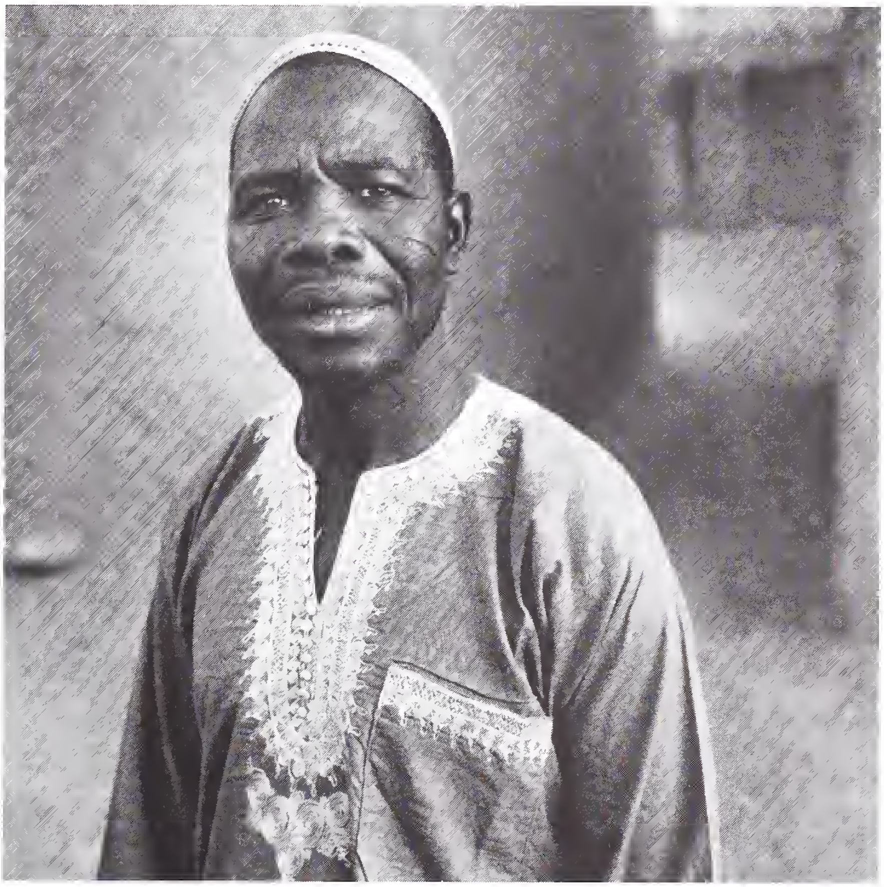
ANNOUNCING A NEW BOOK . . .

PORTRAITS OF PEOPLE FROM EIGHT CULTURES WITH QUOTES ABOUT THEIR DREAMS.

Contributors include Henri Nouwen, Katie Funk Wiebe and seven professional photographers. 57 duotone photographs.

A DRY ROOF AND A COW

DREAMS AND PORTRAITS OF OUR NEIGHBOURS



WE INVITE YOU, on the occasion of MCC's 75th anniversary, to join us in gratitude for God's grace and call. Reflect with us on the hopes and dreams of these friends and neighbours who guide the work of MCC.
—*John A. Lapp, Executive Secretary, Mennonite Central Committee*

1920–1995
75 Years Service in the Name of Christ

Purchase your copy at bookstores and SELFHELP Crafts of the World shops this fall. Or to order send $19.95 US/$25.95 Cdn plus $5 for shipping to Mennonite Central Committee, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500 USA or 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3T 5K9.
Proceeds benefit Mennonite Central Committee's relief and development work.

A MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PUBLICATION

Reviews

FILMS

Comic homicide

Natural Born Killers, *written by David Veloz, Richard Rutowski and Oliver Stone, produced by Jane Hamsher, Don Murphy and Clayton Townshend, directed by Oliver Stone*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

How many murders can you stand to watch in two hours? Answer this question before you go to see *Natural Born Killers*. Oliver Stone's newest and most controversial film brims with blood. In it Stone aims to lampoon America's love of violence. Whether it succeeds will depend on audiences' ability to take the film with a grain of salt.

Killers follows Mickey (Woody Harrelson) and Mallory (Juliette Lewis), two young, lovey-dovey Americans who happen to be mass murderers. In a bonanza of pop-culture images, Stone parodies the glamour we Americans lavish on our criminals. The film skewers pop media with its caricature of a TV "reporter" who follows Mickey and Mallory's trail, spoon-feeding its death images to an eager TV audience.

Some critics argue that the film participates in the glorification of violence that it intends to lampoon. And it's true that no character exists in the film to criticize the cult of violence or offer an alternative. Stone leaves judgment to viewers' intelligence, a dangerous gamble.

When Jonathan Swift published *A Modest Proposal* in the 18th century, suggesting the public eat Irish children, critics voiced the same criticisms Stone is receiving today: The work is too graphically violent to be funny, its denunciation of society not articulated clearly enough. Today Swift's work is regarded a classic model of satire. In another 200 years, Stone's film will be as well.

Sidney Baldwin (*Newsweek*)

Death images: *Mallory's first murder victim is her father (Rodney Dangerfield).*

But today the film's violence is too close to reality for comfort. Even though Stone uses every cinematic technique—from cartoon to sitcom—to make his tale surreal, America's obsession with its own violence and the immediate impact of killing on the screen will strike a raw nerve in many viewers, tearing them out of the detached reserve needed to view the film as the satirical comment Stone intended. Even without the raw impact, film satire has to fight an uphill battle against an increasingly illiterate audience unable to view any film at more than face value.

Smart satire needs to be a bit offensive. Its goal is to prick the conscience of its audience. The downside is that it requires an audience with both smarts and a conscience. That given, Stone's *Killers* may be more appropriate in a college film studies class than in your neighborhood theater.

BOOKS

Face Anabaptist racism

Enter the River: Healing Steps from White Privilege Toward Racial Reconciliation *by Jody Miller Shearer (Herald Press, 1994, 214 pages)*

Reviewed by Joan Gerig, Chicago

Enter the River arrived on my desk the same day as the South African weekly newspaper describing Nelson Mandela's inauguration. As I scanned both, my own life experiences of white privilege surfaced—for it was in South Africa I first acknowledged the privilege my white skin gave me.

Although my experiences in South Africa will not mirror those of all readers, I doubt that anyone can read this book without replaying life stories—and that, I feel, is its strength. When we look carefully at our lives and begin telling our stories, we prepare ourselves for moving forward—perhaps for entering the healing river.

The author, who admits to loving a good story, has filled the book with

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European Anabaptist Heritage I	June 16 – July 3
European Anabaptist Heritage II	July 12-27
European PAX Tour	July 16 – August 2
England-Scotland	August 9-24
Mexico	November 15-30
Australia-New Zealand	February 18 – March 12, 1996

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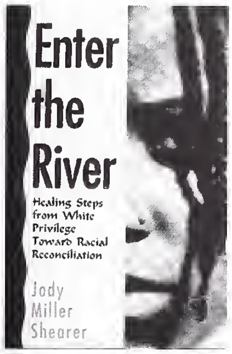
stories, not only from his life as a white male struggling to understand the privilege his skin color affords him, but also from Mennonite congregations and individuals in the process of moving toward racial reconciliation.

Stories from the Bible are also introduced: Naaman's entering the water for healing becomes a metaphor for the journey we can all take. The stories catch our interest and also soften the blow—it isn't easy to admit and observe our own racism. The gentle way Shearer coaxes the reader to enter the healing water makes this a book especially useful for small groups. The resource list, Scripture and subject index add to its value.

In the first chapter the author says the book is for white Anabaptists (it is clearly written for Mennonites; my search for mention of other Anabaptist groups proved futile), not because we are the most racist of people but because we live in a racist society. As Christians we are called to be a reconciled community. This book works with us to move toward that reconciliation as we find our own healing.


Enter the River
Healing Steps from White Privilege Toward Racial Reconciliation
Jody Miller Shearer

How to celebrate history

Heritage Celebrations: A Guide to Celebrating the History of the Church *by Wilma McKee (Faith & Life Press, 1993, 100 pages)*

Reviewed by Lawrence Klippenstein, Winnipeg

Many congregations have been looking for this book for a long time. Anyone who has helped prepare a church celebration has also experienced the demand on time, energy and ideas it takes to get one off the ground.

Heritage Celebrations will help reduce the stress of preparing church anniversary celebrations by giving a host of suggestions on planning, organization, publicity and involving the congregation to make a heritage event successful.

The author gives her view on the need for holding heritage celebrations in a congregation; we must do it, she says, "to call to remembrance, to solemnize, to honor, to proclaim and to praise." In this way, she adds, "we learn anew the value of patience, we see hidden gifts emerge, and we become aware in new ways of the meaning and value of fellowship and community."

Heritage celebrations, she suggests, put us in touch with our congregational stories. So the outline of steps to writing a congregational history is particularly pertinent. A book, often the longest-lasting memorial of a heritage celebration, can be one of the most frustrating tasks. Again, here is help on the way.

The volume was first put out by the General Conference Mennonite Church Historical Committee in 1992. It was then revised and republished in this attractive volume with a slightly less denominational cast to give it an even wider appeal. Well done.

Resources

- **En Route: The Memoirs of Henry J. Gerbrandt** (CMBC Publications, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4; 1994, $15 Cdn.) contains recollections of Gerbrandt—teacher, missionary, pastor and church leader.
- **God's Call to Mission** by David W. Shenk (Herald Press, 1994, $10.95 U.S./$15.25 Cdn.) shows how mission rooted in Jesus offers a gospel larger than any culture and respects the truths found around the world.
- **Enjoying Family and Community 1995 desk calendar** is now available for custom imprinting from Mennonite Board of Missions Media Ministries, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801-2497, (800) 999-3534.
- **The Politics of Jesus** (revised edition) by John Howard Yoder (Eerdmans, 1994, $16.99 U.S.) provides up-to-date findings through text changes and additions to most chapters.
- **Braiding Hearts and Hands** (MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, $9 Cdn.) is an anthology of poems and dramatic readings by Mennonite women reflecting on how women experience the church and on subjects such as abuse, hunger, conflict, poverty and the role of women.
- **A Workbook on Biblical Stewardship** by Richard E. Rusbuldt (Eerdmans, 1994, $9.99 U.S.) is a nine-chapter study contrasting the world's and the Bible's models of stewardship. It covers time, resources, spiritual gifts, money and more.
- **The God of Peace: Toward a Theology of Nonviolence** by John Dear (Orbis Books, 1994, $16.95 U.S.) outlines a systematic theology that begins with the insight that God is nonviolent.
- **Ecotheology: Voices from South and North**, edited by David G. Hallman (Orbis Books, 1994, $16.95 U.S.) includes authors from around the world writing on environmental crisis.
- **The Gospel According to Judas: Is There a Limit to God's Forgiveness?** by Ray S. Anderson (NavPress, 1994, $10 U.S.) explores forgiveness through a dialogue between Judas and the risen Christ.
- **A Generation Alone: Xers Making a Place in the World** by William Mahedy and Janet Bernardi (InterVarsity, 1994, $10.99 U.S.) shows that 20-somethings are in search of meaning and community and are open to a radical Christianity that accepts pain as part of the life of faith.
- **With Burning Hearts: A Meditation on the Eucharistic Life** by Henri J.M. Nouwen (Orbis Books, 1994, $15.95 U.S.) reflects on the meaning of the Eucharist for ourselves and our communities.
- **Teaching for Spiritual Growth: An Introduction to Christian Education** by Perry G. Downs (Zondervan, 1994, $21.99 U.S.) integrates theology, developmental psychology and education to form the foundation for Christian learning.
- **Emerging Voices in Global Christian Theology**, edited by William A. Dyrness (Zondervan, 1994, $17.99 U.S.) contains writings of non-Western theologians, covering subjects such as Christianity amid the violence in Yugoslavia and what form African Christianity should take.
- **Solving the Mysteries of the Dead Sea Scrolls: New Light on the Bible** by Edward M. Cook (Zondervan, 1994, $12.99 U.S.) gives an overview of the history of the scrolls and the different theories scholars have developed about them.

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Editorial

Is pastoral ministry still possible?

John A. Esau

A pastor called me yesterday. He had several things on his mind, but one question caught me off guard. "Knowing what you do now about the experiences of pastors and congregations, would you ever consider returning to a pastoral role in a congregation?"

I knew instinctively that this was more than a question about my personal interest or openness to make such a move. The more profound question was whether or not I still believed in pastoral ministry. Or was I hiding behind an administrative position, safely removed from the tough realities out on the front line?

Is pastoral ministry still possible? Have we created such high expectations that it is no longer a reasonable task in and for the church? Have we placed pastors into a role where they are highly vulnerable and perhaps even subject to abuse? Why would anyone want to be a pastor?

There are three ways we understand the pastor-congregation relationship that together make the pastorate a difficult role in which to live and work. Pastors must live with a high level of complexity in this relationship, one many would find intolerable.

1. Covenant relationship. Most of us in the church like this term; it is biblical and theological. It has the warm feelings of love and mutual appreciation. It suggests commitment and support.

Pastors want to believe that the term covenant defines their relationship to the congregations they serve. It has parallels to the covenant of marriage, with its commitment to mutual growth, caring and goals. Sure, there are times of failure and occasional misunderstandings, but in a covenant relationship there is always a degree of tolerance and more than a degree of forgiveness.

To speak in covenant language is to speak in words that represent our ideals, our hopes for a relationship that is long-lasting, that parallels our commitment to Christ. Covenant is a good word to describe the pastor-congregation relationship.

2. Contractual relationship. Here is a term with negative overtones. This is not church language; it is business language. It suggests legal obligation rather than relationship. For some it means "doing a job," which may mean doing it with little thought or care. In a contractual relationship the pastor may be used as a "hireling," which means being subject to the usual hiring and firing routines of the business world.

However, the reality is that in our educated and professionally oriented world contracts are important. They help define boundaries and expectations. They form commitments and expectations with a certain precision to avoid misunderstandings. While we may prefer the language of covenant, it is impossible to deny the reality of the church as employer and the pastor as employee.

3. Political relationship. Even in the Mennonite church we have made the pastor's relationship to the congregation a highly political reality. By that I mean that pastors can only serve effectively to the extent that they gain the overwhelming support of the majority of the members.

We're not talking about a simple majority. Generally a pastor must receive a two-thirds vote to be invited to or remain in a pastoral position. And the general wisdom is that you can't function well with less than 80 to 85 percent.

Being a pastor calls for significant political skills and judgments if a pastor is to maintain long-term effectiveness. Outside the public arena, do you know of any other vocation that is so routinely judged by the people being served in such a public manner?

To be a pastor today is to accept a high-risk relationship, balancing as it must the elements of covenant, contract and political reality. I have sometimes compared this relationship to that of our physical body; there are so many things that can go wrong that I am amazed that it works as well as it does most of the time.

I still believe in pastoral ministry. I believe in pastoral ministry because I continue to see how God uses those who are "earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us" (2 Corinthians 4:7).

John A. Esau is director of Ministerial Leadership Services for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

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Inside

Environmental resources for Mennonites / p. 5

12 resolutions to help the Earth / p. 7

Ride a bike / p. 12

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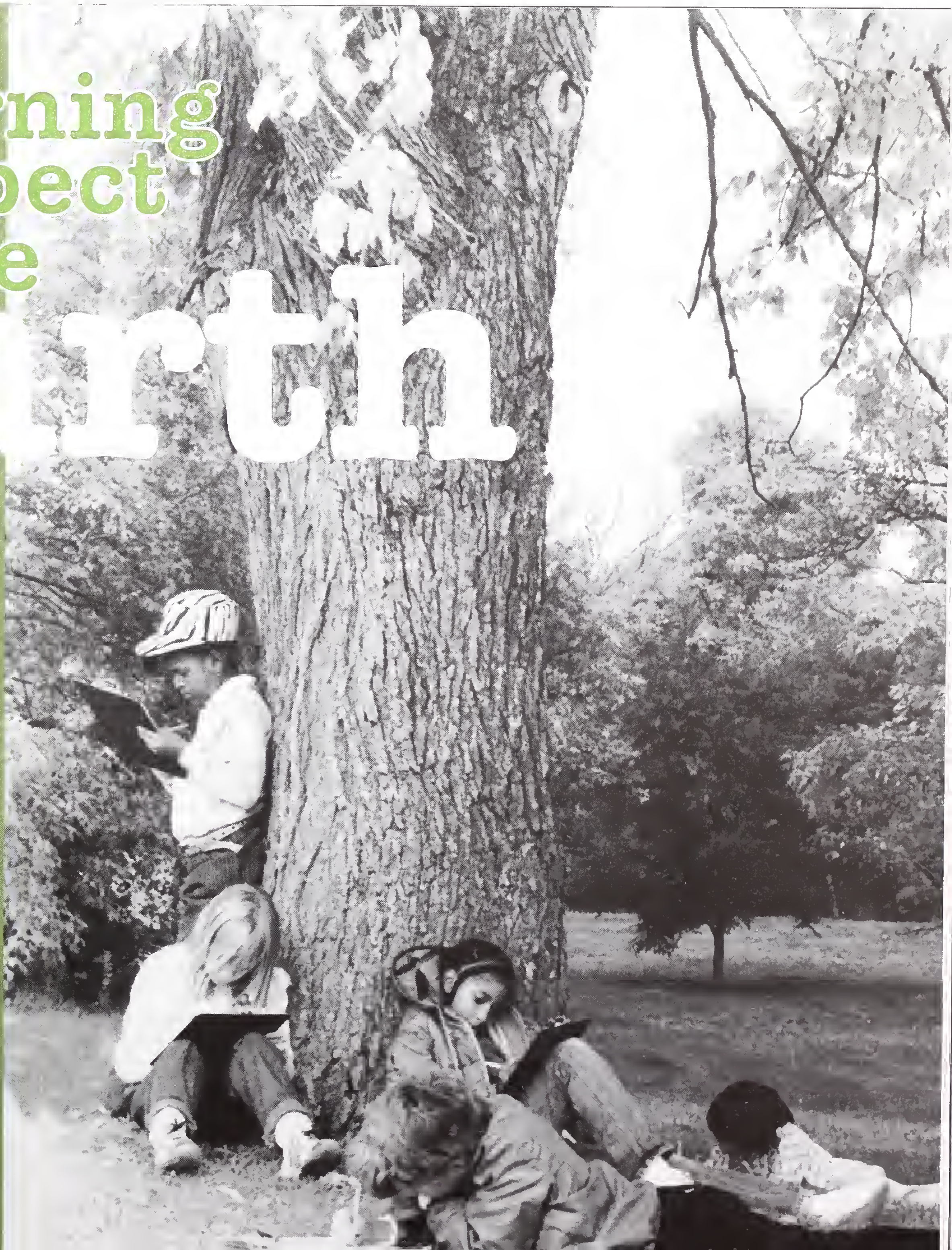
THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 19
OCTOBER 11, 1994

Learning to respect the Earth



- The Earth needs friends in the church (see page 3)
- From selling clothes to saving the environment (see page 6)
- Helping blow the whistle on toxic junk (see page 8)

Prologue

The Bible clearly calls Christians to show concern for the environment. Throughout Scripture you find a holy respect for God's creation. Read the Psalms, or Job, or Jesus' parables, for example.

Perhaps we have become jaded by so-called scientific progress, or perhaps the immensity of environmental destruction overwhelms us. We may want to ignore the problem.

Instead, take some time to read the articles in this issue. Look at some of the resources listed on page 5. Pray about the resolutions on page 7 and ask God how you should respond. Learn what is happening in your community. What happens to your garbage? Is there a recycling program? What about your purchasing habits?

Find encouragement from the stories of Aimee Sixel (page 6) and Scott Kroeker (page 8). Ask yourself what you might do.

In our News section you may read about the recent meeting of the Integration Exploration Committee (page 13). Changes are being proposed. You may add your voice to the discussion by writing a letter to *The Mennonite.*

We've just received another request from a reader in India who wants to receive *The Mennonite* but cannot afford it. You may wish to contribute to our overseas gift fund to help make that possible.

I want to thank everyone who has responded so generously to our appeal for funds. Your gifts are a great help. Thank you very much. *gh*

Next issue: The Mennonite church in Brazil

Cover: CLEO Freelance Photo

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General
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The Earth needs friends in the church

10 things churches and church members can do to help make our planet more habitable

David E. Ortman

Genesis 2:15 tells us that the Lord put man in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it. One meaning of "keep" is "to take in one's charge temporarily." The *American Heritage Dictionary* uses an example: "Keep this for me until I return."

"Think globally, act locally" is catchy, simple and wrong. On environmental issues the church must act globally.

But the church is just beginning to understand this definition. We all know Genesis says, "Be fruitful and multiply." But it does not say to be like fruit flies and multiply.

What can churches and church members do?

1. Work on a theology of ecology. In January 1988, the Catholic bishops of the Philippines issued the pastoral letter "What Is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?" and called ecology "the ultimate pro-life issue." The Committee on Social Witness Policy of the Presbyterian Church has issued a resource paper on "Keeping and Healing the Creation" (contact the Presbyterian Church, 100 Witherspoon St., Louisiana, KY 40202). More work is needed.

2. Take an offering for the environment. Plan a talent show with proceeds going to environmental groups.

3. Think globally. A popular slogan says, "Think globally, act locally." It is catchy, simple and wrong. Multinational corporations and governments think globally and act locally. On environmental issues the church must act globally as well. Adopt an environmental concern in a foreign country: elephant poaching in Kenya, stopping a dam in Hungary or halting rain forest destruction in Malaysia. Write to that country's embassy, collect information and articles. (Global Response, Environmental Action Network, P.O. Box 7490, Boulder, CO 80306-7490, provides information about rain forest destruction, ocean dumping and pollution, atmospheric contamination, and other concerns.) Think globally and act globally.

4. Conduct an energy audit of your church building. Efficient use of energy means good stewardship of resources and of church buildings.

5. Conduct an ozone and global warming audit in your congregation. Educate church members. Set goals for reducing the pollution that causes these problems.

6. Get your lawns and gardens off drugs. Work at chemical-free gardening.

7. Visit wild places. The United States and Canada are blessed with

The marketplace is a voting booth, and we must vote out of office such things as plastics, Styrofoam and nonrecyclable and nonreturnable packaging.

some of the most beautiful land in the world. Go see it.

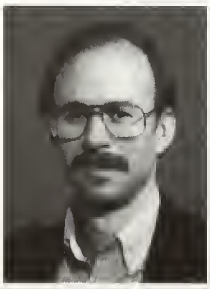
8. Vote at the ballot box. The environment should not be a partisan issue. The environment is not a single issue. It is a survival issue. It is the ultimate pro-life issue.

9. Vote with your pocketbook. You can only vote for political leaders every few years. But every day you cast a vote by what you purchase. The marketplace is a voting booth, and we must vote out of office such things as plastics, Styrofoam and nonrecyclable and nonreturnable packaging.

10. Take the J.C. Penney Catalog test. See how many pages you can look through without wanting to purchase anything.

Barbara Ward has written that churches have two ways they can help the poor and miserable, the first easy and the second difficult: "The easy one is to form active citizens' groups in every country to bully and fight and generally harass politicians so that they actually feel there is a vote at stake. It comes particularly rightly from Christians because they can be radical in the light of their Lord. The second is rather more difficult, and that's to live in a slightly less affluent fashion oneself."

The Earth needs more friends.



David Ortman is currently director of the Northwest Office for Friends of the Earth in Seattle and a member of Seattle Mennonite Church.

shingles, socks and photographs

Suzanne Lawrence

The sky, that day, must have been drunk,
its strength unnatural, its conscience blocked.
It stalked us like a hunting cat.
Like a screaming cat it pounced on the yard
sinking its teeth into veins, shredding the house
and barn and car, flinging ravaged pieces far,
tearing branches of fruit and elm, twisting trunks
forever down, leaving remains of ragged tin,
nails, glass, shingles, socks and photographs.

This fall branches are out of proportion,
as are tall weeds on the bare foundation.
A mist lies where the house had been
and the mist is an empty blanket
on the knees of a midwife moon.
The aching of mist brings no children,
but the aching of children for home
brings mist like a ghost in labor
breathing silent, ineffectual groans.

Suzanne Lawrence lives in Goessel, Kan.

Environmental resources for Mennonite congregations

Compiled by the Mennonite Church-General Conference Mennonite Church Environmental Task Force

Resources for Ecology and Justice—A four-page listing of over 80 resources including prices and ordering information for packets, videos, cassettes, books, study guides and children's curriculum on a wide variety of ecological and justice issues available from American Baptist, Church of the Brethren, Episcopal, Evangelical Lutheran, Mennonite Central Committee, Presbyterian U.S.A., Unitarian Universalist Association, United Church of Canada, United Church of Christ, United Methodist, as well as National Council of Churches, World Council of Churches and others. Compiled by Economic and Environmental Justice Working Group. Order from Eco-Justice, Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853, (607) 255-4225. Single copy $1. (All prices given here are in U.S. dollars.)

Books:

- **What on Earth Can You Do? Making Your Church a Creation Awareness Center** by Donna Lehman (Herald Press, 1993, $9.95). Practical ideas for any congregation (see box).
- **Teaching Kids to Love the Earth** by Marina Lechecki Herman, Joseph L. Passineau, Ann L. Schinpf and Paul Trever (Pfeifer-Hamilton, 1991, 180 pages, $14.95)
- **Christianity in the Environment** by Lewis Moeller and Richard Land (Broadman Press, 1992). Speeches from a 1991 Southern Baptist seminar on environmental problems.
- **Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit** by Al Gore (Houghton Mifflin, 1992). Very graphic, explicit and factual with many statistics.
- **Earthkeepers: Environmental Perspective on Hunger, Poverty and Injustice** by Art and Jocele Meyer (Herald Press, $12.95) provides biblical-ethical foundations, examines root causes, analyzes concerns and gives action suggestions.
- **Seeking the Wilderness: A Spiritual Journey** by Tim Lehman (Faith & Life Press, 1993, $12.95) is a book of meditations in journal style growing out of Lehman's backpacking and canoeing experiences.
- **The Trash Can Review** by Joanne De Jonge (Eerdmans, 1992, $8.99) provides good background concerning environmental issues and responsible living. Includes projects as well as classroom activities for upper elementary and junior high; appropriate for religious education settings.

Videos:

- **God So Loved the World** by Melvin Schmidt (Empire Video Inc., 3412 Ramsgate Terrace, Alexandria, VA 22309, $24.95) looks at creation in an ecological manner.
- **Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice** is a 15-minute video presenting crises of ecology and justice in terms of Christian faith. Study guide and report booklet also available. Order from Distribution Management Service, Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 100 Witherspoon St., Louisville, KY 40202; (800) 524-2612.
- **One Family's Effect on the Environment** profiles a 13-year-old and his family showing what they did around the house to help protect the environment. To order call (800) 446-4997; $14.95.
- **The Cindy Duehring Story** (Lutherans of the Prairie, 721 Memorial Highway, P.O. Box 370, Bismark, ND 58502; $15) explores coping with environmental illness.
- **Wake Up, Dorothy!** presents environmental stewardship and rap music by inner-city participants. For rental (donation plus shipping costs) contact The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Office of Environmental Stewardship, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631; (800) 638-3522.

Magazines:

- **Green Alternatives—For Health and the Environment** is issued bimonthly, $22.50 from Greenkeeping, Inc., Box 28, Annandale-on-the-Hudson, NY 12504.
- **The Egg: An Eco-Justice Quarterly**, $10, contains articles on eco-justice themes and links ecological wholeness with social-economic justice. Contact Eco-Justice, Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; (607) 255-4225.

Packets:

- **Church Concern Packet**, Share, Care and Prayer Ministries, P.O. Box 2080, Frazier Park, CA 93225; by donation
- **Liturgical Resource Packet**, The Eco-Justice Project, Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; (607) 255-4225; $4
- **Earth Stewardship Packet**, and two children's projects: **Caretakers: Earth Stewardship** and **Gifts from God's Earth** from Mennonite Central Committee, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501
- **Healing and Defending God's Creation Hands On! Practical Ideas for Congregations**, Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 100 Witherspoon St., Louisville, KY 40202; (800) 524-2612; $4.95
- **Alternative Christmas and Easter Packets for Congregations** includes study guides, household resources, bulletin inserts, posters, reflections on lectionary passages and other special resources. **Whose Birthday Is It Anyway?** booklet available for $3. Write for current resource list to Alternatives, P.O. Box 429, Ellenwood, GA 30049; (404) 961-0102.

What your church can do

Try these activities using **What on Earth Can You Do? Making Your Church a Creation Awareness Center** by Donna Lehman (Herald Press, 1993):

- Paraphrase Ten Commandments or Beatitudes for Recyclers (chapter 7).
- Plan an activity where everyone shares an idea they used in a celebration (Christmas, Thanksgiving, wedding, funeral) that reduced cost and waste (chapter 8).
- Use the dramatic reading "And God Saw" (chapter 10).
- Have youth create a "recycle rap" during a youth meeting (chapter 10).

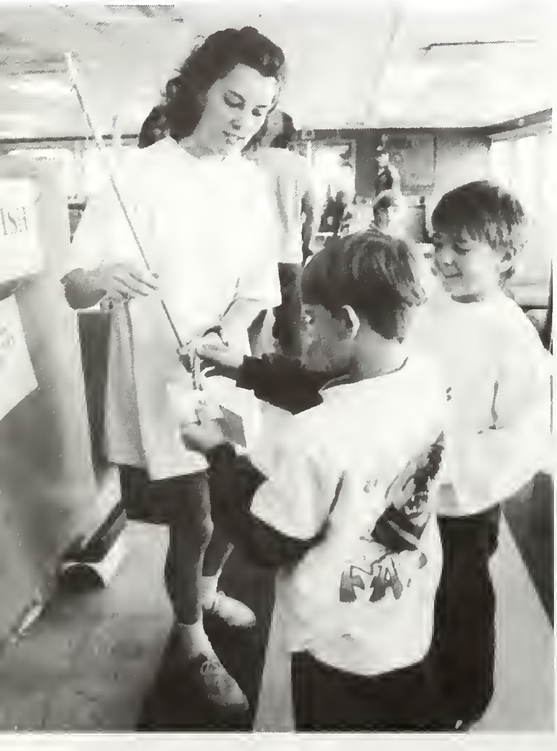
From selling clothes to saving the environment

Through a Mennonite Voluntary Service assignment Aimee Sixel found an outlet for her skills that fit her values.

Carla Reimer

When Aimee Sixel moved to Seattle from Minnesota in October 1992, it wasn't just for a change in scenery. She was fed up with her job as manager of a Banana Republic store in her hometown of Minneapolis and decided she wanted to "help change people's lives."

"Basically, I quit my job because I was tired of working for a company where the sole purpose was talking people into spending money," says Aimee, who has a degree in retail management from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. "I also found it frustrating dealing with the politics of a large corporation."



Carla Reimer

'Little things can help': *Aimee Sixel helps two boys read a "fishy" fact about Puget Sound at a "Go Fish" booth on a ferry.*

After looking into the Peace Corps and other service organizations, Aimee accepted a Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) assignment in the fall of 1992 with People for Puget Sound, an environmental organization in downtown Seattle. Puget Sound is a large estuary off the coast of northwest Washington.

People for Puget Sound is radically different from her previous employer, she says. "The people are great. They're team-oriented, unlike retail, where everyone is competing for the same job."

In fact, Aimee liked her work as a volunteer coordinator at People for Puget Sound so much that she readily agreed to stay on as a full-time employee when her MVS assignment ended in September 1993.

The purpose of People for Puget Sound is twofold: (1) to educate people about how they can prevent pollution in their daily lives and (2) to hold state government accountable in regard to environmental issues.

Started three years ago, People for Puget Sound has more than 13,000 members and is endorsed by more than 100 businesses and organizations. People for Puget Sound counts each person in a household, including children, as a member. Aimee's job is to find volunteers for the organization's many educational activities, which include exhibits, citizen lobbying and children's programs.

One of the organization's most successful educational projects to date is the "Go Fish" booths. On the third Saturday of each month, the booths are set up by a variety of environmental groups on ferries in Puget Sound. Kids have the opportunity to "fish" for facts about Puget Sound and the environment behind a blue cloth screen.

"I think I am getting seasick," Aimee jokes as she sets up a booth on the ferry that travels between Seattle and Whidbey Island. She is amazed by the popularity of the booths, which cost only about $15 each.

Kids, parents and even a few teenagers line up to see what they can catch. One of the kids reads her "fishy fact" out loud: "How much water do you use every day? The average family uses about 160 gallons of water a day for bathing, cooking, washing dishes and laundry, brushing your teeth and

> ***"There are so many things I used to aspire to buy, but now I don't want them."***
>
> Aimee Sixel

filling your squirt gun. Find ways to use water more wisely at home."

"That was fun," said another as he runs off to find his friend. A grandmother stops by the booth and collects the activity calendar and newsletter produced for kids. She has always lived near Puget Sound and wants her grandkids, who don't live near the water, to know about the importance of saltwater.

"The environment is not 'in your face' as much as homelessness. I can't say that Puget Sound is cleaner because I did the accounting today," says Aimee.

Still, she believes "little things" can help the environment. "It's not just you. If every member of our organization follows our 12 Sound Resolutions (see box), 20,000 people are making a difference," she says. "It is the cumulative effect that matters."

Aimee, who tries to walk or use the public transit system, says she is also a different person today because of her MVS assignment. "There are so many things I used to aspire to buy, but now I don't want them. Instead, I want the ability to have experiences."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

12 Resolutions to help the Earth

1. I will visit an aquarium, nature center or museum to learn more about the creatures that inhabit the earth.

2. I will plant trees, shrubs and flowers.

3. I will conserve water at home and at work. When you fix those leaky faucets and put in flow restricters, you save money on your water bill and help save our most precious resource.

4. I will store and use as little chemical weed and bug killer as possible. Think before you buy. Take a minute to read the list of toxic ingredients and manufacturers' instructions on household chemical pesticides.

5. I will try alternatives to chemical pesticides around my house and garden. There are practical alternatives that work: Houseplants can be treated with a spray of two tablespoons liquid dish detergent mixed in two cups of water. Dogs and cats can be kept free of fleas with eucalyptus or rosemary flea collars and a daily diet supplement of one-half teaspoon brewer's yeast per pound of pet weight. Outside, keep your soil healthy with weeding, crop rotation and mulching to reduce the need for pesticides.

6. I will take leftover chemical pesticides, paint, thinners and other solvents to a hazardous-waste collection center. "Disposing" of household chemicals in the backyard, garbage or down the drain too often means these toxic chemicals end up in streams. When storing household toxic chemicals, keep them in their original containers in a cool, dry space out of the reach of children and pets.

7. I will keep my car in good running condition. I will take the bus, bike or walk as often as I can. Engine tune-ups not only keep the air cleaner but also reduce the amount of toxic chemical fallout washed off roads into our waters.

8. I will recycle all waste motor oil at a recycling station. About 60 percent of the used oil drained out of engines by do-it-yourself mechanics isn't recycled but disposed of in landfills or down drains.

9. I will use vinegar and baking soda instead of chemical cleaners. Every 100,000 residents use about 3.75 tons of toilet-bowl cleaners and 13.75 tons of liquid household cleaners each month. There are practical alternatives: Slow-flowing drains? Try pouring in one-half cup baking soda, one-half cup white vinegar and boiling water. Dirty windows? Use a spray of undiluted white vinegar.

10. I will use unbleached and recycled paper. Every piece of new paper used means more pollution and fewer trees. Pulp mills have done a good job since 1969 in reducing the amount of pollutants they discharge. Let's help them do even better by asking for and buying unbleached recycled paper products whenever we can. We'll save trees, too.

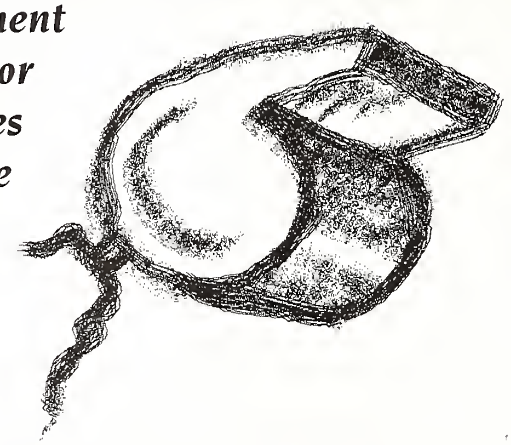
11. I will buy products in containers that I can easily recycle or reuse. Recycling is becoming more and more a way of life. And it's made a real dent in the 5 1/2 pounds of garbage each person creates every day. Packaging makes up one-third of our garbage; buy products in containers that can be easily recycled.

12. I will share these resolutions with at least two friends. You know the arithmetic: If you tell two people, and if those two people each tell two other people … That's how individual actions start adding up to large, collective action. Together, we can make the difference.

Adapted from 12 Sound Resolutions by People for Puget Sound

Helping blow the whistle on toxic junk

Scott Kroeker helps keep the U.S. government accountable for how it handles its radioactive waste.



Carla Reimer

Near Scott Kroeker's desk at the Government Accountability Project, an environmental agency in Seattle, an ordinary-looking plant sits on top of a bright orange plate contaminated with radioactive material.

"I'm waiting to see if the plant survives," Scott says with a laugh as he measures the level of radiation with a Geiger counter. "I've learned a lot about radiation since I've been here—we're not being exposed. The particles only travel about a foot and can't penetrate the skin. I'd worry if I had to eat off the plate."

His co-worker found the plate, which dates back to the 1940s or 1950s, at a second-hand store in Yakima, Wash. It's one small example of just how hard it is to get rid of radioactive waste.

As a Mennonite Voluntary Service worker at the Government Accountability Project since January 1993, Scott has been exposed to a much larger, more frightening example: the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, a 560-square-mile site in southeastern Washington. The Columbia River runs through the middle of Hanford, which produced plutonium from 1944 to 1989.

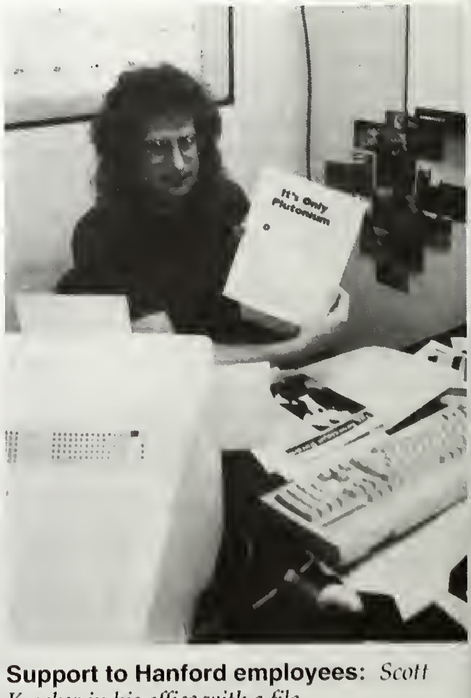
"Most people know the catch words, but they don't know the extent of the damage. There are 61 million gallons of high-level radioactive waste sitting in tanks at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. We can't even begin to fathom that much toxic junk," says Scott, who is from Saskatoon.

"That doesn't include the contamination of soil, buildings, birds, mice and sagebrush from leftover materials that were used in the 50 years of plutonium production," he adds.

Today the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, which employs about 16,500 people, functions solely as a storage facility for the waste it created. The 61 million gallons of radioactive and chemically hazardous waste are stored in 177 underground tanks, each 75 feet in diameter.

According to the Washington Department of Ecology, at least 67 tanks are known or suspected of leaking about 1 million gallons of contaminated liquids into the soil and groundwater. As a result, Hanford is the only one of 100 government-owned toxic waste sites to be listed in the "most urgent" category by a division of the U.S. Public Health Service.

A number of organizations, including the Government Accountability Project, are pushing the Hanford



Carla Reimer

Support to Hanford employees: *Scott Kroeker in his office with a file*

Scott finished his Mennonite Voluntary Service assignment this past January. MVS is a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church. For more information contact MVS, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100 or MVS, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781.

Contact the Government Accountability Project, 810 First St. N.E., Suite 630, Washington, DC 20002-3633, for more information about the Hanford Nuclear Reservation or other toxic waste sites.

Nuclear Reservation to solidify the leaking radioactive liquids as soon as possible to prevent further contamination. To date, no consensus has been reached as to the best method of immobilizing the waste.

As office manager, Scott works together with staff lawyers to provide support to Hanford employees who are concerned about plant safety. These whistle-blowers come from a range of positions at Hanford. Among those the Government Accountability Project has helped are a security specialist, a senior engineer, a health physicist and a secretary.

Scott leafs through one of five binders filled with correspondence and photos documenting safety problems at Hanford from a woman who worked as a secretary there. Her office was located in a one-time plutonium production facility.

She reported that she had been exposed to leaking chemicals, asbestos and radiation. In 1990 she experienced chronic fatigue, bronchitis and headaches, which her doctor attributed to her workplace.

Scott says that the woman had first expressed her concerns to Hanford management and the U.S. Department of Energy before turning to the Government Accountability Project. The U.S. Department of Energy is responsible for the overall management of Hanford; the department contracts its work to the Westinghouse Hanford Corporation.

"The management didn't listen. They said she blew things out of proportion. They called her abusive. She received a negative evaluation, which affected her salary," he says. "This has been their standard response for a whistle-blower."

If the whistle-blowers want publicity, the Government Accountability Project helps them bring their documents to the attention of the media and/or U.S. Congress, Scott says. The environmental agency has also brought lawsuits against the U.S. Department of Labor on behalf of Hanford whistle-blowers.

Other whistle-blowers have reported different forms of harassment—death threats, phone taps and speeding cars that try to drive them off the road. "Most of them are confused and angry because they never thought they would be treated this way for trying to do their job," he says.

"They are extremely ethical people, who are willing to risk everything—jobs, families, homes, their standing in the community—to come forward and tell the truth," Scott says. "I don't know if I would have the courage to do what they've done. I'd probably move away to a different job.

"Some days," he admits, " I feel like quitting because I get cynical about what's happening. But there have to be some people who care."

Scott decided he wanted to make a difference in the fall of 1988, after reading an issue of *Time* magazine that pictured Planet Earth as its "Man of the Year." "I had always been kind of aware of environmental problems. But after I read that issue, I realized that we are destroying the Earth.

"Everybody needs to realize that they can make a difference," he says. "We're at a critical time. We've pushed the Earth to its limits."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

There are 61 million gallons of high-level radioactive waste sitting in tanks at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation.

The tomato

Anita Rediger

I held between my fingers
the warmth of you today.
God's fragrant breath empowering
growth...development...and
finally conceiving fruit.

In your firm round flesh I found
myself
seeking a heartbeat.
Your redness
radiating
our common pulse—God's Spirit.

I yearn for ripeness
but its fulfillment seems
so distant.

Why am I still so green,
so hard, so bitter?
When will be the days of completeness,
with their aroma of sweetness?

Anita Rediger lives in Geneva, Ind., and is a member of First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind.

Letters

Not a parable

Re: "The Many Faces of Hunger" by Emily Will (Aug. 9 issue, page 3), I am not contesting her message, but I was disturbed by her quotation of Jocele Meyer, which was reprinted in bold print at the end of the article: "Why is it that the only parable that appears in all four Gospels is of Jesus feeding the multitudes?"

Since when has Jesus' feeding of the multitude become a parable? I interpret his feeding of the multitude to be nothing other than a miracle. The Thompson Chain Reference Bible has no listing of this incident under "Parables of Christ." It does, however, list Jesus' feeding of the 5,000 under "Miracles of Christ" and records all four Gospel references.

Why would this be interpreted as a parable? Are we minimizing the fact that Jesus possessed the love, will and power to perform miracles? To me it seems like an attempt to dilute the message and power of the gospel. *Alberta Rensberger, Goshen, Ind.*

Wrong message to youth

I was shocked to read in the Aug. 23 issue (page 17) that the youth at Wichita '95 will be subjected to the anti-sex education "True Love Waits" program begun among the religious right wing.

Last spring an adult Sunday school class in our congregation studied Judith and Sol Gordons' *Raising a Child Conservatively in a Sexually Permissive World*. In it we read of many studies where specific, concrete education about human sexuality led youth to make better informed choices.

"Just say don't" is an abdication of our adult responsibility to give youth the information they need to make healthy, responsible choices.

The slogan also begs the question "waits for what?"—activity with a risk of pregnancy? activity with a risk of transmitting the AIDS virus? mutual masturbation? kissing? holding hands?

Might I suggest an alternative program: "True Youth Questions and Experiments—and here's what you'll need to know!"

My teenager will certainly not be coming to Wichita if this stays on the program. *Frank R. Trnka, Minneapolis, Minn.*

Too much to read

We saw a request for feedback on *The Mennonite*. We appreciate it a lot, but from our household perspective it is just too big. There is so much in each issue that we cannot read it all carefully. It's not that we spend our time on TV. We try to scan the daily newspapers and *Newsweek* and some farm papers. Could you save money by making the issues smaller instead of "bigger and better"? *Mr. and Mrs. Randolph H. Schmidt, Newton, Kan.*

Eating in on Sundays

The Holy Spirit touched my conscience when I read the editorial about eating in a restaurant on Sunday at noon (see "The Secular Seduction," July 26 issue). Since I have been worshiping at an African-American church, helping with music and editing a newsletter, *Roots and Wings*, we have been eating at a Chinese restaurant. Services get out at 1:30 p.m., so I haven't felt like cooking those Sundays.

From our leaders

Darrell Fast

"[Make] every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3).

The matter of bringing the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church (MCs and GCs) together is on our minds and hearts as we look to our joint conference in Wichita in 1995. I like to think of this challenge as one component of our calling to be peacemakers, since peacemaking is all about bringing people together.

In the New Testament, the word for "making peace" occurs only twice. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says that the peacemakers are blessed, and will be known as God's children (Matthew 5:9). In Colossians 1:20 peacemaking is used as a description of the redemptive work of Christ on the cross. This is strikingly similiar to Ephesians 2:15, where making peace (as two words in both English and Greek) describes Christ's reconciling work of bringing Jews and Gentiles together. In other words, peacemaking is both God's work and our work.

As we get closer to Wichita '95, there are also signs—and reports in the Mennonite press—of disagreements and differences between us. I do not see this as negative. It is a sign of vigor and health when these differences come into the open. And the challenge that faces us is the calling that is so central to our life and identity as Mennonites. We need to exercise our calling to be peacemakers—to bring people together. Disagreements can become opportunities for peacemaking.

So the task of Mennonite integration today is part and parcel of our mission. As Wichita '95 draws near, let's seize the opportunity and challenge of continuing God's work in Christ of making peace—bringing people together who have been distant from each other, even at odds. This is certainly part of the Mennonite way of reaching out to other people at home and abroad. And it should apply to one another in the community of faith. We should "make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Then we will be blessed and known as God's daughters and sons.

Darrell Fast is moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church and pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

I don't want to keep anyone from worshiping God on Sunday, however, so I have decided to buy a carry-out meal on Saturday for Sunday. I can make herbal tea to go with the fortune cookies.

I also do not want to be responsible for causing people to live shorter lives. The day of rest is so important for everyone, as well as mornings with a church family. *Geraldine Harder, North Newton, Kan.*

Dysfunctional group behavior

St. Paul (Minn.) Mennonite Fellowship tried to clarify the "inaccuracy" that the issue of homosexuality was a volatile one for them (Letters, Aug. 23 issue, page 9). They claim that this issue was "not directly related" to the harassment they received.

I offer an alternative explanation. I suggest that the congregation's toleration of homosexual practice was troubling to many people who believe that it is sinful. A claim that it is sinful, however, hardly fosters "a spirit of dialogue on the issue." Thus, these were implored to be "open, caring and respectful"; their unyielding convictions were effectively stifled in congregational discourse, so the objections went underground and bred resentment but came out later in the heat of conflict.

I do not endorse anonymous letters, which I believe are immature. Nor do I defend vicious or malicious words or deeds. Still, I believe that excluding any accusation of sin on the grounds that it short-circuits the "process" of "discernment" or "closes the door" to dialogue is an equally dysfunctional group behavior. *Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

More on health-care reform

Several recent letters to *The Mennonite* have implied that the Canadian health plan and/or Canadian health care are inferior or less than adequate. We object to these statements by people who, from the rest of their writing, have no knowledge of the Canadian health system. We admit that our plan is not perfect. There are the occasional glitches, as in everything humans do, but when hospitalization is required, it is immediately available. Only when the surgery is elective or nonlife-threatening is there a waiting list. Sometimes that list gets too long. As we have experienced it, Canadian health care is on par with anything offered in the United States.

Someone suggested that it is the family's responsibility to care for its sick and elderly. That is possible only to a limited extent. Most of us are not wealthy enough to be able to care for a seriously ill person in our family for any length of time. We all need help. The Bible is explicit about our responsibility to care for each other, even the stranger among us.

Another writer suggested that in a free-enterprise system one should have the choice of carrying insurance or not. Maybe, but the only ones in the United States that we know who choose not to carry some health insurance (and most of it is limited in time and scope) are those who are unable to afford it and do not qualify for state aid. The free-enterprise system, while it has provided many benefits, is not necessarily biblical. It has moved us far on the road of individualism, which is not compatible with the teachings of our Savior.

The beauty of the Canadian system is that if a person needs health care, it is available without question of ability to pay, regardless of your position in life. As a country we have agreed to help each other and to join in "bearing each other's burden." It increases our tax bill, but our information says that it is still less than what our friends south of the 49th parallel pay for their health coverage. Some critics of our plan say we cannot afford it; it's too costly. Neither can we afford the cost of going "free enterprise," not only in terms of dollars and cents but also in terms of the physical and emotional suffering that would follow. Whether we like it or not, we are our brother's or sister's keeper. *Jake and Verna Nickel, Saskatoon*

I was disappointed with some of the letters written on health-care reform. They seem to be missing the point.

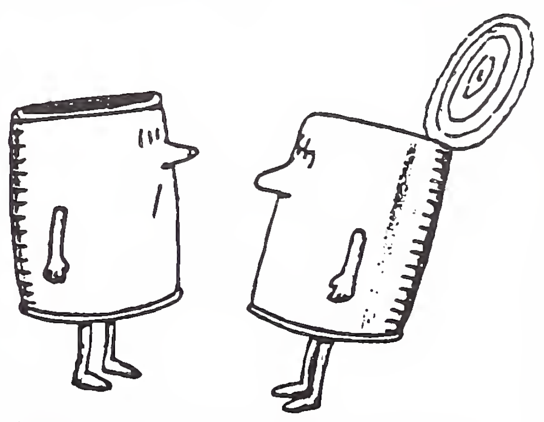
Mennonite Mutual Aid advocates universal health care not because of some political agenda or because it wants to go out of business but because it sees that thousands of people can't afford health insurance. Even when they have insurance, people on a $5 an hour paycheck can't afford the deductible.

Nathan Ledford (July 26 issue, page 10) thinks that the sick should be cared for by their families. In what cloistered world is he living? Apparently not one with $50,000 medical bills, broken families, abandoned spouses and $5 an hour paychecks.

Jeffrey Long (July 26 issue, page 10) urges that the church retain the right to health care. Is this a joke? The mightiest efforts of all the Mennonite churches combined wouldn't have the slightest effect on U.S. health care. He suggests that congregations should provide insurance for the poorer members. Is his church also willing to look after the other 5,000 people in his community in Washington? What about elderly people in his congregation already receiving socialized medicine, otherwise known as Medicare?

Jason Gross (Aug. 9 issue, page 10) has never heard of anyone waiting for a surgical procedure. I'd like to tell him about a family I know where the daughter had a birth defect. The family could not afford the $20,000 needed to correct it, so the girl suffered with it for 10 years. I offered to pay half, but only after they had exhausted all appeals. Finally the surgery was done for free at a Shriners' children's hospital.

The past several decades have shown that socialized medicine in Europe and Canada has its strengths and weaknesses. A French student of mine calls his system "wonderful." A Swiss expatriate calls his system "backward." One can only hope that if adopted in the United States it is done efficiently and fairly. *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*



"Well, if you did believe in recycling, what would you want to come back as?"

Reprinted from *Echoes*, December 1992

Speaking out

Ride a bike

The bicycle offers an alternative to our auto-addicted society.

Peter Sprunger-Froese

The automobile is an environmental and financial burden. We have learned about poisonous auto exhaust emissions, but we give shallow and merely technological solutions to the problem. The catalytic converter has impressively reduced hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide emissions but has increased the carbon dioxide buildup that contributes to ozone depletion and climate change.

In the United States an annual $300 billion in public funds for road construction and repair and municipal services feeds our auto-addiction. The auto market in the United States (and Europe) is largely saturated. Auto and oil industries are now counting on the Third World for market and profit gains, aided by huge World Bank and other loans. The ensuing results are obvious: an ever-deeper rich-poor gap in a world where already only one out of 200 adults can "afford" their auto-contagion.

Companies formed a trust to destroy streetcars and bus companies systematically throughout the United States from 1930 to the early 1960s. This effort, known as National City Lines, was a holding company formed by General Motors, Phillips Petroleum, Standard Oil, Firestone and Mack Truck. It purchased financially ailing, privately owned streetcar systems with the aim of abandoning them quickly through shoddy maintenance practices and cutting services, thereby encouraging the purchase of automobiles. Hence, our auto society.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

When a culture becomes so subservient to the demands of "auto-mobility," it can no longer question the intrinsic value of the automobile per se and becomes "auto-cratic." Is it any wonder the U.S. Department of Commerce refers inquiries on bicycle trade not to transit planners but denigratively to its Division of Toys and Games?

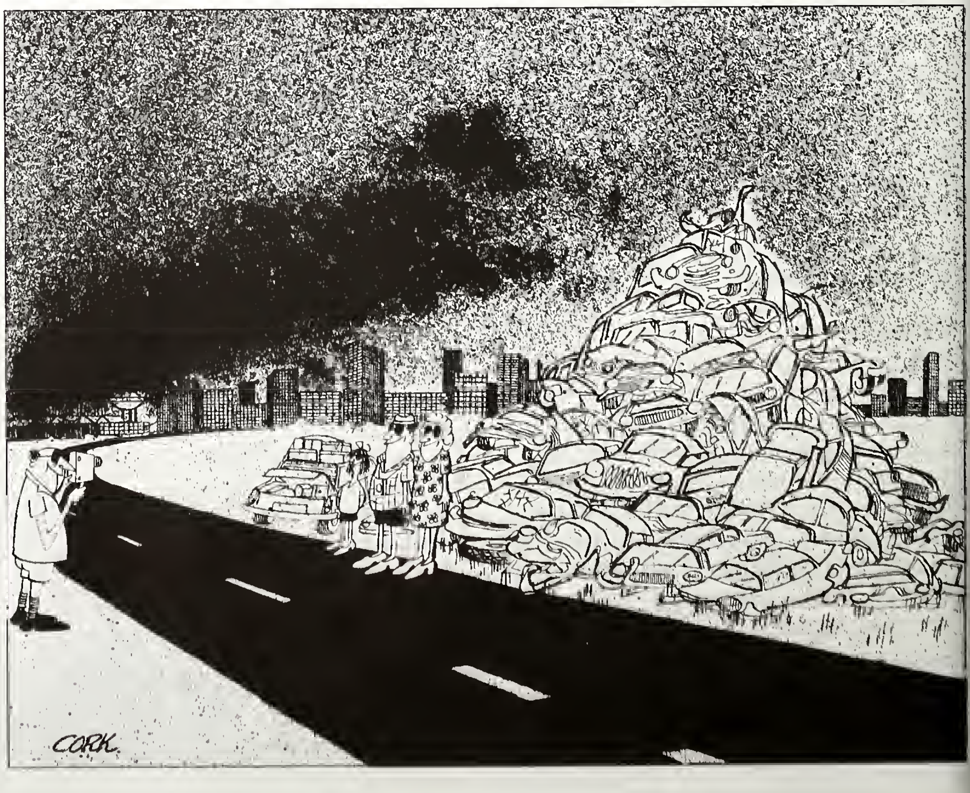
This price tag on the auto exacerbates the bicycle's call for our small planet. The world's 800 million bicycles—now concentrated in China and India—are increasing most rapidly in West Germany, Japan, the Netherlands and Denmark. Bicycles transport more people in Asia alone than do automobiles in all other countries combined.

Rickshaws: The bicycle's ingeniously simple design, changed little since the 19th century, has captured the imaginations of today's engineers. They have developed alternatives like rugged off-road bikes, folding bikes to enable bus-commuting, recumbents (rider in reclined position), hand-crank bicycles for the physically challenged, taxi-tricycles, as well as bicycle-retrofits like grain and metal grinders, rickshaws, water pumps and electricity generators. As we rush for engines that run on gasoline substitutes (e.g. corn-based ethanol), we overlook a technology that coverts food directly into fuel and consumes less energy per passenger mile than any other form of transportation, including walking. An average-pace, 10-mile commute requires 350 calories of energy, or one bowl of rice. A car uses nearly a half-gallon, or 18,600 calories.

The bicycle is an energy marvel able to beat the sword of waste, dependency, inequality of mobility and daily carnage into the plowshare of interdependence, greater community stability, humility, earth care and health. The bicycle also promotes peace closer to home. Pedestrians and cyclists who bump into each other likely say, "Excuse me." People in cars in similar circumstances frequently threaten with lawsuits or weapons. Bicycles cultivate the human impulse to conscience.

The bicycle counters our easy tendency to link truth and success, principle and issue. It teaches us how easily disappointed and short of wind for the long haul we have become, because there are muscles we have not used.

Peter Sprunger-Froese, who burned his driver's license some years ago, lives in Colorado Springs, Colo., where he repairs bicycles and works for peace.



Integration planners sketch two-country model

Newton, Kan.—Meeting here Sept. 17-19, the Integration Exploration Committee (IEC) looked further at developing U.S. and Canadian structures in a broader North American Mennonite church.

In its next-to-last meeting before submitting its final report to the General Boards of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC), the IEC had to make some adjustments in its thinking.

The committee met Sept. 17 in North Newton, Kan., with representatives from three area conferences: South Central and Rocky Mountain conferences (MC) and Western District Conference (GC). At each of its semi-annual meetings the IEC has met with local conference people to hear their views on a possible integration of the two denominations.

While all three conferences reported being generally positive toward integration, staffer Bill Zuercher said that South Central had some major resistance to integration from a few conservative congregations.

Marvin Zehr, WDC conference minister, asked what would happen if there is a no vote at Wichita '95, since integration is already happening in a number of areas. The U.S. West Coast has integrated into two area conferences, and Eastern Canada has been integrated since 1989.

Carl Rudy of Rocky Mountain Conference said, "You often hear that integration is coming from the top down, but it seems to me it's a grass-roots movement."

James Lapp, MC general secretary from Elkhart, Ind., agreed. "Integration didn't begin in 1983 or 1989, nor will it end in 1995 or 2003. It's an ongoing process." He said he hopes the committee will be able to bring a proposal to Wichita (Kan.) next July that represents where people are.

In the following days the IEC tackled other concerns. Members heard reports from meetings held in the last few months about publishing, resourcing and missions.

IEC member John Kraybill of Harrisburg, Pa., reported from a meeting of representatives from Lancaster Conference (MC). Some people there wanted to know if in an integrated structure congregations can be members of an area conference without being members of an integrated denomination.

Ruth Naylor of Bluffton, Ohio, reported from a meeting of the East Central States Inter-Mennonite Council, which includes leaders from Central District (GC), and Illinois, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences (all MC). This council developed interim agreements toward integration among these groups. The agreements allow for joint staff appointments as well as a possible joint gathering of the four conferences in 1996.

'We need to see ourselves as a people of God transcending national boundaries.'

George Brunk III

The committee also responded to a suggestion that instead of an integrated church there be a federation of Mennonite groups. Members pointed out that a number of federations already exist, including Mennonite World Conference, Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Mutual Aid. To add another seemed redundant, committee members said.

The GC proposal: The greatest discussion of the committee came in response to a proposal from the GC General Board that a U.S. GC conference form in 1997 or 1998. James Gingerich of Moundridge, Kan., said the timing seems wrong, that at Wichita '95 it may disrupt or confuse discussion of integration.

Lapp said that MCs had felt that a U.S. structure would be minimal, "but this pushes the discussion in a different direction."

Helmut Harder, Conference of Mennonites in Canada general secretary, reminded others that after next July the CMC will no longer be a GC entity, since it will have become integrated.

Inside the news

CHM cuts Indian leaders council budget, looks at CHM's future / p. 15

COM sets aside money for new projects / p. 17

Port Hardy (B.C.) Mennonite Church celebrated its 10th anniversary July 29-31.

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Twelve Bluffton (Ohio) College students will study peace in Derry, Northern Ireland, this fall, taking classes at Mages College of the University of Ulster. They will have work placements with social agencies and church centers dedicated to peace and reconciliation.

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The Horn of Africa is perilously close to another famine, reports *Evangelical Missions Information*, possibly worse than the one that tortured Ethiopia a decade ago. The United States' Agency for International Development counts 17 million people in Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan as "at risk" of starvation. Two-thirds are already suffering droughts. Reasons for the crisis include lack of rain, slow delivery of food aid and war.

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The Mennonite Central Committee U.S. executive committee sent U.S. President Bill Clinton a letter Sept. 16 asking him not to violently force the removal of the Haitian military regime. The letter said, in part, "Our disappointment certainly matched yours when the military interrupted the hopes and dreams of the Haitian people. But it is also clear to our workers in Haiti, and to many of us who have visited there, that forceful intervention will have disastrous results for the Haitian majority. Poverty and its manifestations have a much greater hold on the people of Haiti than General Cedras. ... It is our conviction that armed force achieves little and makes long-term peace and development difficult to achieve."

Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan., will celebrate its centennial Aug. 4-6, 1995. A book documenting the first century of the church is being published.

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After nine days of classes, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., reported an increase in students for the fourth consecutive year. Total fall enrollment is 646, up from 636 last year. Full-time students are up to 544 from 537. Bluffton (Ohio) College's registrar's office reported 903 total students, up from 841 last year. The full-time equivalent is 863, up from 800. Residential students and freshmen enrollment are both up.

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A group of well-known Canadian soloists have donated their time and talent to raise money for Mennonite Central Committee and Habitat for Humanity. The soloists—Henrietta Schellenberg of Winnipeg, Catherine Robbin of Toronto, and Paul Frey and Daniel Lichti of Kitchener-Waterloo—joined Kitchener-Waterloo Philharmonic Choir conductor Howard Dyck in recording excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*. The CDs and tapes will be available early in November through MCC Canada. CDs will cost $23 (Cdn.), tapes $16.

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Haitian newspapers have reported that supporters of Haiti's dictatorship act as translators for refugees presenting their cases at Guantanamo Naval Base in Cuba. After risking their lives at sea to escape Haiti, refugees find they are required to divulge sensitive information through these translators in order to provide "proof of persecution." Christian Peacemaker Teams reports that the Haitian newspaper *Libete* has released a list of 30 such translators. The paper says, "How do you expect people to give proof if the one who is translating into English what they are saying in Kreyol is a Macoute [member of Haiti's paramilitary], a drug trafficker or a coup supporter?"

That leaves the General Conference a de facto U.S. entity.

Gingerich said that U.S. GCs don't have a clear understanding of Canadian reality and that creating a U.S. structure would need a lot of education. Further, he said, the idea of treating a U.S. GC structure like an area conference of the Mennonite Church is "GCs' greatest fear" and would never fly.

From there IEC members looked at binational structures. "We need a model that can be flexible in terms of what we support and what we don't," Lapp said. "Because the forces of history have pushed us into national identities, we need a guiding vision of what we are beyond that."

"We need to see ourselves as a people of God transcending national boundaries," said George Brunk III of Harrisonburg, Va. He then asked, What will give us a qualitative sense of being a North American body without a lot of structure?

The committee came up with ideas for what a North American church might include (see box). Kraybill liked the conception. "It takes the sting out of the [GC General Board] proposal."

The MC members of the committee wanted the GCs to put the restructuring discussion on hold in order not to hinder discussion of integration. Vern Preheim, GC general secretary, from Newton, said that perhaps they could deal with integration agenda before deciding on restructuring.

Harder pointed out that "we're already set up for what the [GC] General Board is proposing." It would be a natural move, he said.

Naylor proposed making the restructuring "an interim arrangement."

Richard Early from Harrisonburg, Va., said he was not that concerned. "This is a way to bring the General Conference more in line with the Mennonite Church," and it fits the integration proposal.

IEC members finally agreed that

- integration should take priority in discussion at Wichita '95,
- there is concern about the timing of the GC proposal,
- calling it an interim arrangement is helpful,

The brave new Mennonite world

The Integration Exploration Committee defined tentative roles for a North American conference and two country conferences in a new, integrated body of Mennonites. Here are their suggestions of what would characterize the national and binational levels:

Binational level would

- be a conference of conferences
- hold a large gathering every four years—a joint meeting of the two national-level bodies
- be overseen by a board accountable to the two national-level structures
- have a general board comprised of the executive committees of the two national-level boards
- select its co-moderators from the two national-level executive committees
- shape common North American vision and identity and do tasks that nurture common faith
- convene its board at least once per year—more frequently as needed
- act as a clearinghouse and assign tasks for the national-level groups
- coordinate North America-wide programs as they emerge
- have two associate general secretaries: the two national-level general secretaries

National levels would

- hold annual council meetings
- be primarily responsible for program and finance
- connect directly with Mennonite World Conference and Mennonite Central Committee

The group suggested that a new U.S. body would meet every two years. The Conference of Mennonites in Canada currently meets annually.

- they'll look at it again at their February 1995 meeting.

Lapp asked, "With Canada already integrated, can we see this as a stage toward integration?"

Other items: The committee looked at how to integrate funding, since the two denominations organize it differently. A task force will look at the question in more detail before the next IEC meeting.

IEC members also discussed names. Preheim proposed making a trade by calling a new entity the Mennonite Church and calling a new integrated magazine *The Mennonite*. Without discussing the latter much, members came up with the name Mennonite Church North America for the integrated denomination and the names Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church U.S. for the countrywide bodies.

Members left other details for their next meeting, to be held Feb. 11-13, 1995, in Chicago. *Gordon Houser*

CHM cuts MILC subsidy, discusses future

Fresno, Calif. (GCMC)—Commission on Home Ministries U.S. approved an executive committee recommendation to substantially decrease funding to the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council over the next 10 years.

CHM U.S. took the action at the fall CHM meetings at Peace Community Church, Clovis, Calif., Sept. 16-17.

The action means the annual subsidy to MILC will drop from $126,466 in 1994 to $75,466 in 2004, a net loss of $51,000. CHM U.S. and its predecessors, including the Board of Foreign Missions, have provided a subsidy for Native work since 1880.

"Long-term subsidy creates weak churches. If we want to end paternalism, we need to end the subsidy," said James Wenger, Fresno.

"In order for Native churches to be strong, we need to establish churches that are self-supporting," said Danny Begaye, MILC staffer, in a separate interview. However, he noted that not all Native church members agreed with him on this point.

The recommendation also specified how the remaining MILC funds should be spent. It proposed the following: (1) that the funds designated for pastors and churches be shifted over the next five years to leadership training and church planting, and (2) that the money designated for the Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., be shifted over the next 10 years to a school endowment fund.

While MILC representatives from Arizona and Montana had agreed to the basic subsidy reduction, they asked for flexibility in how the money should be spent. Oklahoma had not sent a representative to the MILC meeting in May about this issue.

Nancy Brubaker, Reedley, Calif., argued that since CHM's relationship with Native churches "never has been on a level playing field," CHM U.S. should give up a need to control how the money is spent. "In this case, we need to risk and trust. That would be another step along the way," she said.

Willis Busenitz, who serves as the pastor at the White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church, Busby, Mont., said he felt "torn about the need to give a sense of autonomy" and the need to push MILC in the right direction. He likened the situation to one where a grown child is still living at home and the parents have to tell the child it is time to move out.

At the same time, Busenitz admitted that it would be hard for pastors of Native churches to take on second jobs to support themselves. "It will not be easy for them to be bivocational because they live in communities where there are many needs," he said.

Malcom Wenger, Newton, Kan., said that the change might cause some of the existing Native churches to close down or even look to other denominations for support. "We also have to be prepared for feelings of abandonment. But the goal of getting people to be independent is important," he said.

Pearl Janzen, Reedley, former CHM member who attended part of the meeting, expressed sadness that much of CHM's relationship with Native

'We also have to be prepared for feelings of abandonment. But the goal of getting people to be independent is important.'

Malcolm Wenger

Already more than $5 million has been committed in the first year of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary's Partners for Ministry campaign. The initial target was $4 million. The current total comprises 43 percent of the seminary's goal of $11.9 million in the 3 1/2-year effort. The Lambright Center, the first visible product of the campaign, will become the hub of the AMBS continuing-education program. It was dedicated Sept. 18.

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Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, received seven new pianos, valued at $70,000, in August. The pianos are part of an agreement with Kawai Music Canada and J.J.H. McLean piano dealer in Winnipeg. They were given on a free-loan basis in exchange for the college's agreement to host an annual piano sale on its campus. The college released an address list of former students to the dealer, who will invite them to the sale. McLean hopes to sell enough pianos to make the deal worthwhile. The college receives a commission on the sale of each piano, which will go toward the purchase of the new pianos from McLean.

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The Dominican Mennonite Church asks for prayers concerning the Haiti/Dominican Republic border, reports Mennonite World Conference. The embargo by the United Nations on Haiti has worsened the country's poverty, driving desperate Haitians to cross en masse into Dominican territory. Meanwhile commerce has been stopped by the total closure of the border imposed by the Dominican Republic in the face of international pressure. A prayer campaign called "Mennonites for Haiti" is being carried out in some Dominican churches. In the future this effort could include food and medical assistance.

The annual Council of International Ministries will meet Dec. 11-15 in Techny, Ill. The theme will be "The Health of the North American Mission Enterprise." Contact Colleen Nafziger, CIM, at P.O. Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370.

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The Pontifical Academy of Sciences threw Pope John Paul II a curveball by recommending that families have only two children in order to help curb world population growth. The academy, composed of more than 80 scientists of different religions and nationalities, plays an advisory role to the Catholic Church. Its recommendation directly contradicts the pope's stance: "All propaganda and misinformation directed at persuading couples that they must limit their family to one or two children should be steadfastly avoided," the pontiff told United Nations population expert Nafis Sadik in March. (*The Christian Century*)

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Twenty Christian young people from Mexico and five Central American countries visited Cuba July 29 to Aug. 11 in a youth encounter with 60 Cuban young men and women from Mennonite and Baptist churches. The young people worshiped together and carried out service projects. Mexican Mennonites were moved by the hardship they observed, but Salvadoran participants noted that Cubans do not suffer the absolute poverty of many Central Americans. The difference, said Garcia de Pedroza, is that the Cuban population seems to equally share meager resources, preventing the gross inequality and extreme misery of many Central Americans. Another Mexican Mennonite commented that Cuba's economic situation stimulated a sense of community and mutual support, as well as drawing people closer to God.

Fresno-area churches model evangelism

Fresno, Calif. (GCMC)—The thought of evangelism doesn't intimidate Mennonite churches here in the least.

The Commission on Home Ministries learned just how much church planting is considered a normal part of the activities of area congregations during its meeting here Sept. 16-17.

CHM named the Fresno area as its 1994 City on a Hill project because of the many ways the churches are reaching out through church planting and service projects. The churches received a one-time grant of $20,000 from CHM to develop their work further.

CHM members heard about plans to plant two Spanish-speaking churches in Fresno and nearby Sanger. They also heard about the efforts to reach the Spanish-speaking residents of Reedley, Calif., who comprise about 50 percent of the town's population. Nancy Brubaker, Reedley, reported how the newly emerging Iglesia Vida Nueva is holding evangelistic campaigns in the parking lot of First Mennonite Church Friday nights.

Social service projects are also a big part of the church work. Among the newest is an effort to find jobs for refugees through a program called Jubilee Jobs. It was initiated by the Hmong Community Church and Mennonite Community Church, both in Fresno.

churches has been built around money. "Native people have a lot to give to us. We need to build our relationship with them," she said.

The recommendation to decrease the MILC subsidy and to designate how remaining funds would be spent passed with one opposing vote.

The future: General Board proposals to restructure the General Conference also received considerable attention. One proposal recommends a shift from three commissions to two. The other recommends the formation of a U.S. conference parallel to the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Several members wondered about the proposals' timing. "We are at the brink of change [through possible integration of the General Conference and the Mennonite Church]. Why do we want to throw in another change? This is total confusion," said Busenitz.

Jodi Tse, Saskatoon, asked if the changes were being proposed because of the decline in giving to the General Conference. "If money is not the issue, I prefer to wait until after integration," she said, noting that her understanding is that Mennonites are slow to change. "If you put two changes in front of them, they will be unwilling to swallow them." The General Board indicated that shrinking finances was only one of the reasons it was recommending structural changes.

Miles Reimer, Mennonite Voluntary Service staffer, asked, "Are we going to be closer to the congregations [because of these proposals]? The linkage has been reduced to where many congregations are frustrated. If it helps us relate more credibly, let's do it."

In the end, the commission agreed to give unanimous support to both proposals from the General Board.

Other business: Marco Guete, secretary for Hispanic ministries, brought a proposal from General Conference Hispanic pastors that asked that the Hispanic Ministries Reference Council be disbanded and a new organization —the Hispanic Mennonite Church Association—be formed.

This new association, which would consist of representatives from all the General Conference Spanish-speaking churches, would relate to CHM. However, it would have the added role of serving the fellowship needs of Hispanic churches and facilitating dialogue about integration with the Mennonite Church, said Guete. The commission approved the proposal, effective immediately.

CHM members said farewell to Bob Hull, part-time secretary for peace and justice. His position, which will end in January 1995, was cut in March due to budgetary constraints. Other staff members will take over parts of his work. They expressed appreciation for his 15 years of service with CHM.

They also voted to increase Chris Graber's position as CHM administrative assistant from 60 percent to 80 percent effective in the 1995 fiscal year, to take on additional duties in congregational communication. *Carla Reimer*

COM budgets for new initiatives

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) has set $50,000 aside for "new initiatives." The sum creates a space for new programs in the context of a 5 percent budget cut in 1995.

The commission approved its tentative 1995 budget at fall meetings in Lansdale, Pa., Sept. 16-17. COM executive secretary Glendon Klaassen presented the proposal for new initiatives. It earmarks $50,000 to fund several new COM projects, including youth exchange programs, E-mail dialogues, "mission in reverse" (bringing overseas leaders to North America), planning joint projects with other agencies and connecting to area conferences and clusters of churches.

The proposed 1995 budget of $2,756,995 represents a cut of $145,105 from 1994. That cutback will mean a drop in personnel, both in North America and overseas, according to Klaassen. The personnel cuts have all come through attrition. COM has enough budgeted to place up to six new missionaries overseas in 1995.

Also on the table were two proposals from the GC General Board. One proposal calls for a U.S. structure similar to the one in Canada. The other would merge much of the work that COM and the GC Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) do under a new commission.

In a later interview, Klaassen said commission members felt that dividing GC into two national structures preempted the suggestion to merge COM and CHM. He said the commission felt COM could continue under such new structures as a binational program, with a board made up of representatives from Canada and the United States, as it is now. He said the commission felt it might not make sense then to create a new commission since the Conference of Mennonites in Canada already has extensive home mission programs of its own.

Prior to the meetings, the COM executive committee met with area business leaders. They discussed new options for funding and ways business models might facilitate COM work. Klaassen said the business leaders reminded the committee that "people do not give to budgets, they give to causes; they give to people." They suggested moving away from a centralized budget, which can work in a church where individuals have ownership, but not at a conference level, Klaassen said.

The commission also met with staff from other agencies. With Mennonite Central Committee staff they discussed using the model of Botswana (where Mennonite work is coordinated by a couple jointly appointed by COM and MCC) in other places, particularly Lesotho. The commission also discussed potential joint work with staff from Youth Evangelism Service of Eastern Mennonite Missions.

The commission also

- appointed Peter Rempel representative to the newly formed Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission Canada. Its formation responds to Revenue Canada regulations that call for international agencies receiving Canadian donated dollars to have significant Canadian representation at the board level;
- approved China Educational Exchange guidelines, which place COM emphasis in China on training leaders rather than investing capital;
- approved a 2.5 percent cost-of-living salary increase for missionaries working only under COM. *Larry Penner*

A Creation Summit will be held Feb. 24-26, 1995, at Wonderland Camp and Conference Center, Camp Lake, Wis. The summit is sponsored by the Mennonite Environmental Task Force. Contact Lenore Waltner, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515-1245, (219) 294-7523.

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The London tabloid *The Sun* has listed "amazing coincidences" suggesting Jesus (the King of Heaven) and Elvis (the King of Rock) may be the same person. Among them:

- **Jesus walked on water; Elvis surfed;**
- **Jesus brought light to those sitting in darkness; Elvis studied to be an electrician;**
- **Jesus said, "Love your neighbor"; Elvis sang, "Don't be cruel";**
- **Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruits"; Elvis sang "Tutti Frutti." (*Salt*)**

Balancing books

(MCC)—Mr. Waen Wou, leader of a Takeo province (Cambodia) community development committee, sits with his granddaughter and calculates how much rice his village has banked. Mennonite Central Committee-assisted rice banks lend rice to farmers who run short before harvest. The farmers then pay back the rice, plus extra for interest, so the program can sustain itself.

Pearl Senseng (MCC)

Record

The Morning Star Mennonite Fellowship, Muncie, Ind., and the Comunidad de Amor Mennonite Church in Philadelphia will each receive a $6,000 grant from the Tenth Man church building program of Mennonite Men this fall. Mennonite Men is a part of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

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Mennonite Central Committee and Zairian Mennonites are joining forces in their first team effort to minister to people from outside Zaire. Two North American MCC workers and three Zairian Mennonites are taking part in a three-month assignment to help establish a camp for 40,000 Rwandan refugees on Zairian church property near the airport in Bukavu, Zaire. They are working under the direction of the Zairian Protestant church body (ECZ).

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A coalition of churches in Philadelphia is sending parishioners into the streets in an effort to curb violent crime. Last fall church members started going out one night a week to chat on the street corners with the young people who hang out there. "It's gotten to the point where they kind of expect to see us," says Tenth Memorial Baptist Church trustee Reggie Carn. Tenth Memorial has taken other steps into the community, including open-air worship services; hiring a youth worker whose sole task is to be on the street talking to young people; and "adopting" several classes at a nearby middle school, bussing the students to health clinics, chaperoning them on field trips and buying clothes for them. Church members also patrol a street by the school two days a week. (*The Christian Century*)

DEATHS

John William Neufeld died Aug. 28 at age 64. He was a former pastor at Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church and a member of First Church in Vineland.

MINISTERS

James F.S. Amstutz was installed Sept. 18 as pastor at West Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Bob Cottrill is associate pastor at Cedar Valley Church, Mission, B.C.

Eric Deckert has returned as summer assistant pastor at the Salem (South) Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D. He served there from June 1992 to September 1993 as student assistant pastor.

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

Wayne Halvorson is youth pastor at Cedar Valley Church, Mission, B.C.

Werner Janzen is pastor at Flatrock Church, Cecil Lake, B.C.

Glenn Kelso is in training to be church planter for the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia in the Sardis-Promontory area, with **Doug** and **Sandy Epp**.

Jake Pauls, pastor at Bethel Church, Winnipeg, retired from ministry Aug. 28.

Carlos Siemens is youth pastor at Olivet Church, Clearbrook, B.C.

Brian Wiebe is music director at Cedar Valley Church, Mission, B.C.

Dan Wollf is associate pastor at Greendale Church, Sardis, B.C.

WORKERS

Gary Chupp has been named assistant men's basketball coach at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Dennis Detweiler has been named

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adjunct instructor of social work at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Krislyn Enns, Faith Church, Leamington, Ont., is beginning a one-year term with MCC's Intermenno program in Haarlem, the Netherlands, where she will work as caretaker of a church and youth house.

Gerry Epp has been named adjunct instructor in social work at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

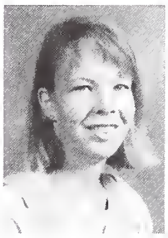
Marjean Harris has been named adjunct instructor of social work at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

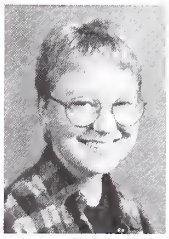
Natasha Krahn, Saskatoon, is beginning a one-year term with MCC's Intermenno program in Purmerend, the Netherlands, where she will work as a nurse assistant.

Lynne Lillie, Lower Skippack Church, Skippack, Pa., returned to Pennsylvania in June. She taught English and served as a youth worker and Bible study leader for the Commission on Overseas Mission in Taichung, Taiwan.

Marianne Siemens, Fiske (Sask.) Church, is beginning a one-year term with MCC's Intermenno program in Elspeet, the Netherlands, as a housekeeper at a Mennonite conference center.

Enns


Krahn


Siemens

Catherine Unrau, Waterloo-Kitchener (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, is beginning a one-year MCC Serving and Learning Together term in Taiwan teaching English and piano.

Mary Wolfe, Home Street Church, Winnipeg, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Winnipeg in mediation services as a trainer and community mediator.

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for a **fundraiser**. This half-time to three-fourths-time position, based in one's home, is available Dec. 1 and lasts 18 months. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must be committed to peace, international understanding and justice; be familiar with MCC; have experience with fund-raising and grant writing; self-starter and free to travel within the United States and Canada and also to Laos during December 1994 or January 1995. Applications due **Oct. 31**.

Interested people in the United States contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. In Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381**.

Director of Long-Term Stewardship Cultivation Project. This is a new cooperative program sponsored by the Mennonite and General Conference Mennonite churches; it is being funded by Mennonite Mutual Aid, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, the Division of General Services of the General Conference, and Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries of the Mennonite Church. The office will be located in Elkhart, Ind.

The candidate should have experience in stewardship education and a background in theological studies; financial development work also helpful. Proven administrative skills, familiarity with sponsoring Mennonite denominations, commitment to Mennonite/Anabaptist values, good communication skills and willingness to travel are also important.

The position is available immediately and is projected as a full-time position at least through 1999.

Please respond **by Nov. 15** to **Stanley Kropf, 421 S. 2nd St., Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516, (219) 294-7131**, for additional information.

Camp Friedenswald, a growing Mennonite camp and retreat center, is looking for people interested in six-month to two-year **voluntary service positions.** Skills and interest in two of the following areas are recommended: food preparation, housekeeping, maintenance, program (outdoor education, ropes program, etc.). Benefits include room, board, monthly stipend, living in a Christian community amid a natural setting. Positions open immediately or Jan. 1, 1995.

Contact **Doug Luginbill, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031; (616) 476-2426**.

Eastern Mennonite University has the following positions open:

- **Faculty position in biology:** Full-time position beginning fall 1995. Ph.D. required. Teaching and research experience preferred. Primary teaching responsibilities for the areas of microbiology and human or vertebrate anatomy. Possible teaching responsibilities in immunology and introductory biology courses. Adviser to preprofessional health science students. Active research with students encouraged.

- **Faculty position in international agriculture and biology:** Full-time position beginning fall 1995. Ph.D. required. Teaching and research experience preferred. Primary teaching responsibilities for courses in soil science, agroecology, pest management and horticulture. Additional teaching responsibilities in introductory biology and one upper-level biology course.

- **Faculty position in chemistry:** Full-time position beginning fall 1995. Ph.D. required. Preferred specialty area in physical, analytical or inorganic chemistry. Primary teaching responsibilities for the areas of general chemistry and upper-level courses in area of specialty. Active research with students expected.

- **Faculty position in English:** Full-time position beginning fall 1995. Ph.D. in literature or linguistics. Teaching experience desirable.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Send résumé to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**.

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Mennonite Voluntary Service
Box 347 Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

A **MENNO Project** (Mennonites Encountering New Neighbors Overseas) service and learning opportunity is planned for **Colombia Feb. 4-18, 1995.** MENNO Project needs 10 volunteers to work with Colombian Mennonites in local work projects while getting acquainted with another culture and people. This is sponsored by the Colombian Mennonite Church and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

For information, contact **COM, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100**.

Mennonite Mutual Aid has an opening for a **church relations manager** to enhance MMA's relationship with congregations. This position will require good relational and communication skills while working directly with advocates, pastors and conference and denominational leaders. The person must have excellent management skills including staff supervision, planning, budgeting and project administration. Significant congregational experience and an understanding of Anabaptist denominational structures and church-related organizations are desired. Anabaptist theological training is also desired.

Please send résumé to **MMA, Human Resources Department, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527**.

THE
INNOCENT

The Innocent, a 23-minute video drama, asks who is responsible for violence and suffering caused by war. It is based on a true story of a Lao woman killed eight years after the conflict in Southeast Asia. She is just one of thousands who have died from coming in contact with unexploded anti-personnel weapons. The video and accompanying study guide provoke thoughtful dialogue on peace-related issues. For free loan or purchase contact:

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Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

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134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
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The Past is Present

The Past is Present, a 7-minute video, explains how U.S. bombs dropped on Laos during the Vietnam War continue to maim and kill Lao people. Live bombs still explode in northern Laos, killing farmers who inadvertantly hit them while hoeing and children who mistake them for balls. Tells how MCC and a British ordnance disposal agency are training and equipping Lao teams to safely remove unexploded bombs. For free loan or purchase contact the MCC office nearest you.

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President

The Bethel College Board of Directors announces the search for a president who will lead the college in its second century of excellence. For more than 100 years Bethel College has linked the life of the mind and the life of the spirit through rigorous academic programs and a nurturing community. A distinctive emphasis on academic quality and service to others uniquely prepares Bethel graduates for the challenges and opportunities of living and working in the complex, interdependent global community.

We seek a president who will articulate the distinctiveness and values of Bethel College in a way that cultivates community, builds resources and attracts exceptional students, faculty and staff. We seek a president who will energetically lead the college as it strives to be a diverse community of learners, committed to the search for authentic faith and empirical understanding through programs rooted in the ethics of discipleship, scholarship and integrity.

Bethel College is a four-year liberal arts college with majors in the traditional disciplines and selected career and accredited professional programs. It is located in North Newton, Kan., near Wichita, the state's largest city. The college maintains a residential environment designed to foster integrative learning experiences.

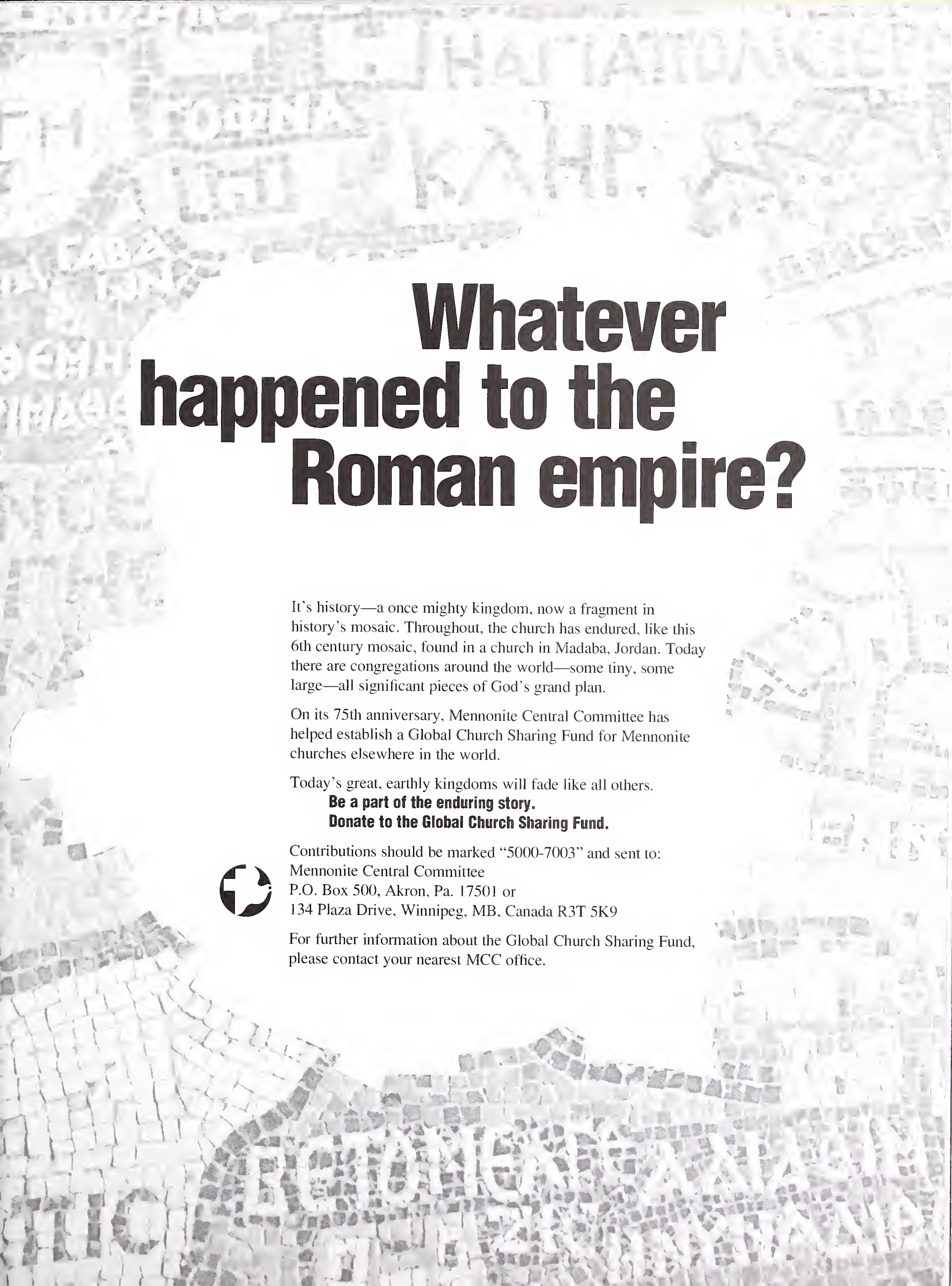
Founded in 1887, Bethel College is the oldest Mennonite college in North America. By tradition and by choice Bethel continues to base its mission on its Anabaptist and academic identity. Bethel College is a self-governing corporation with close ties to its constituent churches and communities.

The board of directors invites nominations and expressions of interest until the position is filled. The president is expected to assume duties during the summer of 1995. The search committee will begin screening candidates Nov. 15. Nominations and expressions of interest should be submitted to:

Alvin I. Penner
Chair, Presidential Search Committee
Bethel College
300 East 27th Street
North Newton, KS 67117.

All applications, nominations and inquiries will be held in strict confidence. Bethel College is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer that actively seeks and encourages nominations of and expressions of interest from women and members of underrepresented populations, as well as from all other qualified individuals.

BETHEL
COLLEGE



Whatever happened to the Roman empire?

It's history—a once mighty kingdom, now a fragment in history's mosaic. Throughout, the church has endured, like this 6th century mosaic, found in a church in Madaba, Jordan. Today there are congregations around the world—some tiny, some large—all significant pieces of God's grand plan.

On its 75th anniversary, Mennonite Central Committee has helped establish a Global Church Sharing Fund for Mennonite churches elsewhere in the world.

Today's great, earthly kingdoms will fade like all others.
Be a part of the enduring story.
Donate to the Global Church Sharing Fund.

Contributions should be marked "5000-7003" and sent to:
Mennonite Central Committee
P.O. Box 500, Akron, Pa. 17501 or
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3T 5K9

For further information about the Global Church Sharing Fund, please contact your nearest MCC office.

Reviews

BOOKS

Evangelizing green

Patching God's Garment: Environment and Mission in the 21st Century *by W. Dayton Roberts (MARC, Division of World Vision International, 1994, 168 pages)*

Reviewed by David E. Ortman, Seattle

World Vision is to be commended for attempting to open the door, although just barely, to environment and mission. As the author, who served 41 years with Latin America Mission in Costa Rica and Colombia, sets out in the preface, "There are many reasons why the facts and potential consequences of the environmental crisis should profoundly concern an evangelical missionary—every evangelical missionary." Unfortunately, the book is a muddle and is unlikely to make it into many missionary suitcases.

Divided into three parts, Part 1 is an abbreviated theology of the environment. However, statements such as "the most reliable chronometer of end-time history is the deterioration of the planet's ecosystems," and the highlighting of Isaiah 51:6, "the earth shall wear out like a garment," are more a mixture of eschatology and environment than mission and environment.

Part 2 consists of short chapters on environmental problems such as population and pollution, vanishing species and water. There is a review of the 1992 Earth Summit and Agenda 21.

Part 3 is a collection of individual responses from five writers, including Ronald Sider and William Dyrness.

Missing is any real analysis of what is going on with church mission programs. My own written requests to Mennonite Central Committee asking what environmental issues are part of MCC orientations remain unanswered.

Dyrness' response sadly notes a 1993 study of over 200 theological seminaries around the world: "Ecology did not even feature as an issue that needed to be addressed."

To new missionaries, I say, skip this book and go directly to this reading list:

- *Missionary Earthkeeping*, edited by Ghillean T. Prance and Calvin B. DeWitt, (Mercer University Press, 1992)
- *Earth in the Balance* by Al Gore (Houghton Mifflin, 1992)
- *A Green History of the World* by Clive Ponting (St. Martin's Press, 1991)
- *Inside the Third World* by Paul Harrison (Penguin Books, 1984)
- *Earthkeeping in the Nineties*, Loren Wilkinson, editor (Eerdmans, 1991)

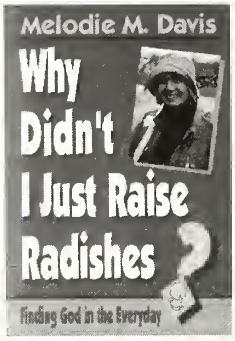
Meanwhile, environment and mission remains a fruitful field for exploration.

Everyday meditations

Why Didn't I Just Raise Radishes? *by Melodie M. Davis (Herald Press, 1994, 166 pages)*

Reviewed by Amy R. Dueckman, Abbotsford, B.C.

If you enjoy Melodie Davis' newspaper column "Another Way," you will enjoy this compilation of some of her columns in more permanent form. The 50 short readings carry such intriguing titles as "First Banquet, in Tennis Shoes," "Of Tomato Skins and Such," "Chicken House Therapy" and "Just Call Me Scientifically Fuzzy."


Melodie M. Davis
Why Didn't I Just Raise Radishes?
Finding God in the Everyday

Subtitled "Finding God in the Everyday," the book is just that—a celebration not of the major or spectacular events of life but of the seemingly unremarkable happenings of our everyday lives. These meditations remind us that most of life, after all, is routine: going to our daily jobs, looking for a schoolchild's lost library book, battling weeds in the summer garden, having family traditions such as hamburgers every Saturday night or popcorn every Sunday. Each chapter ends with a Scripture verse or verses appropriate to the meditation.

Davis' gift in her writing is being able to extract the spiritual truths from these insignificant events, thus making them significant. Her informal, often humorous observations of life address the common experiences of readers and make them easy to identify with. "Why didn't I just raise radishes?" is a question many a frustrated parent may have asked but may not like to admit. Davis reminds us that the downs as well as the ups are part of life; it is up to us to sharpen our spiritual senses and discover how God

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may be speaking to us.

The short chapters with self-contained topics make the book versatile enough to be used for in-order reading or quick browsing. A number of the meditations would be appropriate for devotionals at such places as the family dinner table, a church committee meeting or a baby shower. The author suggests that reading them at least a day apart would be ideal, in order to allow yourself to meditate on each one. But the readings are so engaging you may find yourself wanting to read the whole book at one sitting.

Christ-centered pacifism

He Is Our Peace: Meditations on Christian Nonviolence *from the writings of Howard Goeringer, Eberhard Arnold, Christoph F. Blumhardt and others, edited by Emmy Barth (Plough Publishing House, 1994)*

Reviewed by David Janzen, Evanston, Ill.

After a lifetime of service to the church and the cause of racial reconciliation, Howard Goeringer asked the Bruderhof communities to collaborate with him in publishing a collection of his writings on Christian nonviolence.

This is the result—about half of the 160 selections are by Goeringer and the other half by Bruderhof founder Eberhard Arnold and other spiritual parent figures of the Bruderhof movement. A few of Goeringer's selections include extended quotes from early church witnesses for the way of nonviolence. The selections of this book are structured by themes like "Christian Nonviolence," "Man's Need for Redemption," "Be Subject to Governing Authorities."

The "nonviolence" referred to in this book is not nonviolent direct action for social change like that of Martin Luther King Jr., nor the nonviolent accompaniment of oppressed peoples, like Witness for Peace. It takes several potshots at "pacifists" and "peace movements" because they are deemed shallow in their attempts to build justice on a foundation that is not fully Christ-centered.

The book critiques the just war theory and makes a clear call for nonparticipation in military service. But it does not develop an analysis or a strategy to challenge the structural violence that protects white privilege, Northern economic power and most of us readers.

The theology implicit in this book is close to the classical Christian nonresistance position articulated by Guy Hershberger and other Mennonite writers earlier this century. It focuses on personal holiness, nonparticipation in all forms of state coercion and relationships of justice and peace, all formed by radical discipleship.

The fallenness of the North American church is presumed in passages like this one: "The peace covenant in Christ depends upon little remnants within the larger organized churches that know they have been sent, as Jesus was sent, to be set aside for a holy task, making them different from a world deeply rooted in national culture and politics." It is interesting to see this book as a collaboration between the Bruderhof communities and someone in this faithful "remnant" that they recognize within the wider church.

Most of these meditations fit on one page, suggesting that they might be read as one-a-day personal reflections—or one might look here and there for inspirational nuggets. I found the book a little frustrating in that I could learn nothing concrete in these selections about the Bruderhof's current witness nor of Goeringer's ministry, making the meditations like cut flowers, beautiful but detached from the soil of ministry and community life from which these flowers grew.

The reader will find in these pages a vigorous apology for the way of life found in Jesus, who died and rose again to reveal the possibility and the power of enemy-reconciling love. "For the Christian, nonviolence is not an option, it is the only way—the way of the cross that becomes possible when we completely abandon our life to the risen Lord and freely choose to let his love control our lives."

Resources

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- **Intimacy and Mission: Intentional Community as Crucible for Radical Discipleship** by Luther E. Smith Jr. (Herald Press, 1994, $12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn.) studies five religious communities and shows how their experience can help local congregations discern possibilities for radical discipleship.
- **Making Friends with the Bible** by Elouise Renich Fraser and Louis A. Kilgore (Herald Press, 1994, $9.95 U.S./$14.20 Cdn.) invites readers to rethink their relationship to the Bible.
- **Long Journey Home**, a 14-minute video, tells the story of Cheyenne people who retrieved the remains of massacred Cheyenne people, which were held in storage for 100 years at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, and returned them to Oklahoma for burial. Available on loan from MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151.

Creative Crusader:
Edmund G. Kaufman
and Mennonite
Community

by James C. Juhnke

- Missionary to China
- Bethel College president
- General Conference leader

One of the most influential Mennonite leaders in the mid-twentieth century, Edmund G. Kaufman (1891-1980) was an outspoken, progressive and controversial person who attempted to inspire his people to a more expansive vision of service and mission.

This biography by Jim Juhnke, professor of history at Bethel College, tells of Kaufman's family community in Kansas, his education and preparation for leadership, and his ministries of service in the church.

Before Oct. 21, 1994: $10 (paperback) $25 (hardcover)
After Oct. 21, 1994: $15 (paperback) $30 (hardcover)

Please make check or purchase order payable to Bethel College, and send to Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, 300 East 27th St., North Newton, KS 67117-9989

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BILL DERKSEN
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Editorial

The most dangerous animal on Earth

We have to do better. Otherwise we'll die. Our ability to do immeasurable and perhaps irreparable harm to the Earth gives us an awesome responsibility.

There are many things we can do to help the environment, and we've listed many of those in this issue (see page 7, for example). But what we most need is to change our way of thinking. Even using the term "environment" makes it sound like something out there, separate from us. We live here. How we treat the Earth also affects ourselves.

> **While we climb into our metal icons (cars) to drive four or five blocks on an errand, our planet swelters in a fever from the spreading emissions of carbon dioxide.**

This past summer our family spent several days in Colorado Springs, Colo., during our vacation. As we often do when we are in another city, we visited the local zoo. The Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, though relatively small, includes a number of animals that are members of endangered species. Visiting a zoo is a spiritual experience for me. I become more aware not only of the magnificence of God's creation but of its fragility. Many of the animals I observed were among only hundreds left on the Earth of their kind. I found myself praying for their cousins in the wild and for our wounded planet.

One exhibit at this zoo, which I've seen at others, asked questions about various animals, then provided answers beneath a series of flaps. The last panel asked, "What is the most dangerous animal on Earth?" When you open the flap you encounter a mirror. I knew the answer, but I still felt taken aback as I confronted the fact that humanity has the capacity to destroy all species, including its own.

"God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good," says Genesis 1:31. Do we believe this? If we do, then why do we treat God's good creation so shabbily?

One of many reasons is that we have been trained to see the world as there for our benefit. We treat the air, the water, the ground, the plant and animal life as resources to be exploited for our comfort or pleasure. And we act as if these resources are unlimited.

Potable water: Most of us in the West do not have to face daily the limits of our excess. While we buy what we need in grocery stores stocked with packaged goods (not all of them good), others around the world go hungry. While we turn on a faucet and get all the water we need, most people do not have ready access to potable water. And while we climb into our metal icons (cars) to drive four or five blocks on an errand (my conscience winces), our planet swelters in a fever from the spreading emissions of carbon dioxide.

God loves the world ("kosmos" in Greek, John 3:16), and the healing that Christ brings extends beyond ourselves to all of creation. "The whole creation has been groaning with labor pains" for redemption (Romans 8:22). God's reign includes a restored creation. Part of the Spirit's work in bringing redemption—or justice— is healing the creation.

In his book *Seeking the Wilderness* (Faith & Life Press, 1993) Tim Lehman makes an important point about our working with God in bringing justice: "If indeed creation itself displays the justice of God—the result of God servicing the needs of life itself—then for people to hoard or use up or pollute the Earth strikes an evil blow at God's reign."

Being spiritual, being a faithful Christian, means practicing love—not only love for people but love for all of God's creation. Let us repent, change our way of thinking, and see the world not as a pile of materials to use for ourselves but as a sacred trust to care for and respect. Our own lives may depend upon our ability to make that change. *Gordon Houser*

Inside

I love President Clinton / p. 10

Make this Thanksgiving memorable / p. 11

From guerilla to Mennonite / p. 12

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

109: 20
OCTOBER 25, 1994

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Mennonites in Brazil

- 'A church that has love for one another' (see page 3)
- 'God is wherever people jump up and down' (see page 5)
- 'We have so much growth, it's a miracle' (see page 6)

Prologue

I've never traveled outside North America, but I've learned much about other countries through reading about them and meeting people from other parts of the world.

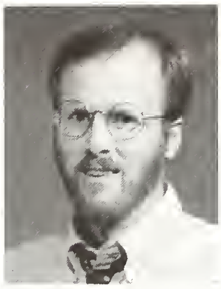
In this issue you get to travel vicariously to Brazil, where you will encounter a young and growing church. Carla Reimer, news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church, traveled in Latin America last April and wrote the stories on pages 3-7.

In Brazil and other parts of the world, people see the Mennonite faith as a radical, biblical alternative to other groups that accommodate their beliefs to the wider society. We in North America have much to learn from these bold new believers.

One of those believers is profiled on page 12, a woman who became involved in the guerrilla movement in Colombia out of a desire to see justice. But she left the guerrillas to become a Mennonite because of her desire for peace.

Don Fry calls for cooler heads and warmer hearts in our vicious political climate (page 10).

The date of this issue falls between Canadian Thanksgiving (Oct. 10) and U.S. Thanksgiving (Nov. 24). J.B. Miller offers some ways to make Thanksgiving more memorable (page 11).



And mission worker Jack Suderman presents a different view on Cuba from what we hear in our secular media (page 18). *gh*

Next issue: Praying with the Anabaptists

Cover: Photo by Carla Reimer

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'A church that has love for one another'

The Brazilian Mennonite Church tries to find its way in a country saturated with religion.

Carla Reimer

REJA EVANGÉLICA

Carla Reimer

> *"Jesus was calling us to commit ourselves to a new reality."*
>
> Valdir Pereira

In Brazil, where about 85 percent of the population is Catholic and the rest align themselves with evangelicals or Protestants, religion may not be as popular as the country's World Cup soccer team, but it runs a close second.

"The people here already know the gospel. Evangelism efforts have been sweeping," says Mennonite mission worker Mel Letkeman of Recife, noting that there are 10 churches within a 10-minute walk of his home, including the Lagoa Encantada Mennonite Church.

It is in this context that the Portuguese-speaking Association of Evangelical Mennonites is searching for its place. The AEM, formed in 1957, receives support from the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church.

While most Brazilians have heard about the Assemblies of God, the largest and oldest of the Pentecostal churches here, few know about Mennonites. "We're still seen with a little mistrust. People think we're a new sect," says pastor Valdir Pereira of Paulista.

As a result, "a lot of people are embarrassed to call themselves Mennonite because they are afraid of being called a sect," says AEM president Antonio Carlos de Faria.

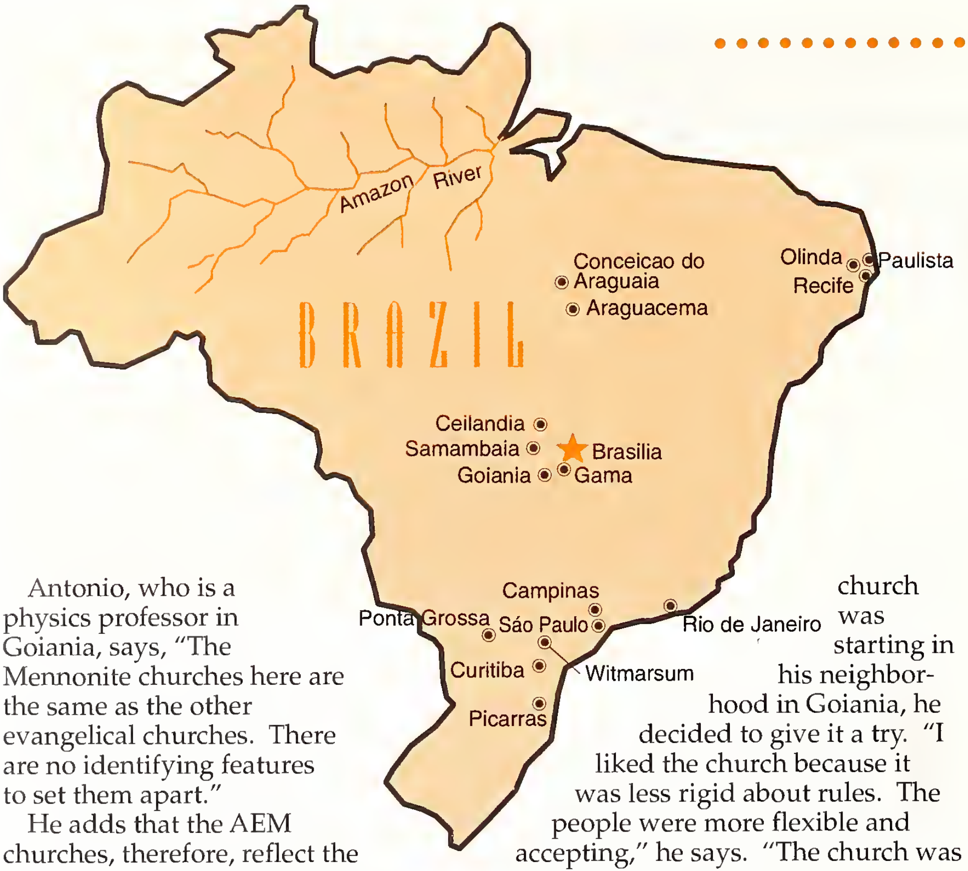
Gerson da Rocha, a regional youth president from Curitiba, says it is often difficult for youth to mention the name of their church when they participate in an evangelical campaign for the first time.

Anabaptist doctrine: Still, pastor Joao Fernando de Andrade of Sao Paulo hopes "to see the Mennonite church occupying a great space within Brazil because the Anabaptist doctrine provides opportunities to change society."

He admits that this dream is far from a reality since AEM only has 29 churches with a total of 1,500 members. In the last five years, AEM has increased its membership by an average of 7 percent per year. The first Portuguese-speaking Mennonite church was started in 1954.

"We are asking why we are not growing," Antonio says. "I think one of the reasons is our lack of understanding of our doctrine. People in the churches need to have a clearer sense of their identity. It is easy to identify the points of Anabaptism, but it is difficult to motivate people in our churches to practice them. For example, many haven't accepted pacifism."

continued on next page



> ***"The gospel of the churches preached here in Brazil is more a gospel of accommodation."***
>
> *Antonio Carlos de Faria*

Antonio, who is a physics professor in Goiania, says, "The Mennonite churches here are the same as the other evangelical churches. There are no identifying features to set them apart."

He adds that the AEM churches, therefore, reflect the same kind of diversity present in other evangelical churches—from the traditional to the Pentecostal—in terms of their worship style and beliefs.

The danger, he says, is that when Mennonite members define themselves in terms of the wider evangelical church, they become "closed to the rest of the world and outside issues. The gospel of the churches preached here in Brazil is more a gospel of accommodation. My vision is that whether a particular church is traditional or Pentecostal is not relevant. We need to overcome our differences and address the needs in our country."

Brazilian Mennonites should have a "revolutionary" approach to the gospel like the early Anabaptists did, he says. "We need to begin to work together on feeding the orphans, developing the communities where we live."

When Antonio moved to Goiania in 1983, he toyed with the idea of starting a church in his backyard because he had yet to find a denomination that was radical enough for his beliefs. He had left the Catholic Church at age 14 because he was dissatisfied with the way it treated youth. Later involvements with the Baptist Church and Congregational Church weren't any more successful.

When he discovered a Mennonite church was starting in his neighborhood in Goiania, he decided to give it a try. "I liked the church because it was less rigid about rules. The people were more flexible and accepting," he says. "The church was accessible to anyone."

Earrings and pants: Others were attracted to the Mennonite church for the same reasons. Maria Socorro Soares, an energetic public school teacher in Recife, recalls how she always felt bad after her visits to different Pentecostal churches. They preached that women who wore earrings and pants would go to hell.

Once, when Maria wore pants to an Assemblies of God service, the leader singled her out. "He said, 'Who has a skirt for this woman?' I ended up traumatized," she says.

At the Janga Mennonite Church in Paulista, Soares found she "could listen to the doctrine and decide. They didn't point fingers and say you're going to heaven or you're going to hell. When the pastor preaches, he preaches with intellect, calmness and decency."

For some members, such as Claudio Pereira, a pastor in Ceilandia, it was the sense of family that drew him to the Mennonites. "I had felt removed from the church and felt the need for something. This was a community I wanted to be a part of because I felt accepted," he says.

"For me, it is a church that has love for one another," says church member Raimundo dos Santos of Brasilia. "It is not like other churches, where all they are concerned about is if you are converted and give a tithe."

A graduate of a Baptist seminary, Valdir Pereira discovered he was a Mennonite at heart. "Even at age 12 I had an understanding that Jesus was calling us to commit ourselves to a new reality," he says.

Social justice: As a teenager, Valdir lost a job because of his commitment to social justice. Several of his bosses attended the same Baptist church as Valdir. They asked him to preach during a month that focused on young people. He recalls how he preached for justice and spoke out against racism. Four months later he was fired from his job. Other employees told him he was fired because of what he had preached.

Today, as pastor of the Janga Mennonite Church, Valdir teaches that poverty is the result of a socially and politically corrupt system. "This is in contrast to many other churches that preach that poverty is a punishment from God and that wealth is a blessing from God," he says.

"People should care about what is happening in the country. I don't see the gospel as preaching that the world is going to end now, but responding to situations, making a better society," says Maria. "I give thanks that I found a church that fits what I believe."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church. She traveled in Brazil in April.

'God is wherever people jump up and down'

Members of the Association of Evangelical Mennonites (AEM) in Brazil have varied opinions about the validity of the Pentecostal movement that is influencing even mainline Protestant churches there.

While some find that Pentecostalism is shallow in terms of its theology and too emotional in its worship style, others argue that Pentecostalism has offered their churches a sense of renewal.

AEM president Antonio Carlos de Faria of Goiania says, "The Pentecostals have a strong emphasis on developing a vertical relationship with God. They want to see God do something."

"The majority of the churches preach rules. They deal with superficial things like how people dress. People think that's how their salvation comes," says Wellington dos Santos, a youth from Recife. "They forget about hunger, lack of housing, so many other things that are primary problems."

"Many Pentecostal churches have worship every day, but they don't work with people's everyday lives," agrees Hans Gerhard Peters, AEM vice president from Curitiba. "I feel Mennonites have a lot to offer other churches because of the way we take care of the material and the spiritual." The Pentecostal theology doesn't require much of its members, he says. "Many churches only ask for a 10 percent tithe. Most people are not ready to give more than this."

He notes that the leader of the Pentecostal church, the Universal Reign of the Kingdom of God, tells people who listen to his regular radio broadcasts to put a glass of water on top of their radios. He tells them that when they drink that glass of water, they will be healed.

Still, Hans admits, it is hard for Mennonites to ignore the power of Pentecostalism: "We see Pentecostals grow, and we want to grow, too." Approximately 70 percent of evangelicals or Protestants in Brazil are considered Pentecostal, according to Robinson Cavalcanti, a university professor in Recife.

Better life: "People are poorly informed. The government doesn't invest in their education," says Maria Socorro Soares, a public school teacher and church member from Recife. "If people see a church is full, they think if they join that church they will have a better life, even if what the church is teaching is wrong. They think God is wherever people shout and jump up and down."

Poverty is also a contributing factor, says Valdir Pereira, a pastor from Paulista. "They're needy people. They have everything inside and they want to get it out. The men can't yell at their bosses. The women can't yell at their husbands. The poor can't yell at the rich," he says.

Valdir says that when they have the opportunity to yell at church, they feel "light" because they have expressed their problems. "But when they wake up the next morning, they discover everything is the same," he says.

Others such as Joao Fernando de Andrade, a pastor in Sao Paulo, attribute the popularity of Pentecostalism to the fact that "Latin Americans are very emotional. We don't like to think or evaluate. It's our cultural heritage.

"I am sad because I see a lot of Mennonite churches on their way to becoming Pentecostal. They emphasize the gifts of the Spirit, like speaking in tongues ... a sensational approach to the gospel. They have a liberal style of worship with music and dance. I am afraid we are ending up copying the garbage of others."

But Sonia Pereira, a high school teacher and church member from Paulista, thinks it is possible to maintain the Anabaptist doctrine and have a more open approach to worship. "Basically, Brazilians are not formal people. People like to move and sing," she says.

And pastor Abraao Reis de Oliveira attributes the renewal at his church in Goiania to a new experience of the Holy Spirit: "People wanted to pray more. They wanted to study the Bible more. They wanted to get more spiritual gifts." The church also experienced rapid growth during this time, from 32 members in January 1992 to 107 members one year later.

Graziela Mara Ifanger, a young adult who attends a church near Campinas, says her congregation also experienced "a movement of God. God was speaking to the hearts of people. We went from singing hymns to singing choruses. We had more liberty to express ourselves through testimonies."

"I think it is good that there is an openness to the charismatic and traditional approaches. Our churches don't all have to be the same to develop an identity," says Abraao. *Carla Reimer*

Carla Reimer

'People like to move and sing': *Brazilian Mennonite youth worship*

'We have so much growth it's a miracle'

Brazilian pastor Joao Fernando de Andrade believes he is called to serve the church.

Carla Reimer

Joao Fernando de Andrade put God on hold for 10 years. It wasn't because he didn't have faith, says Joao. He decided to become a Christian at age 16 and was a member of a Congregational church. And soon after he moved to Sao Paulo in the early 1960s, he started attending the Interlagos Mennonite Church.

In 1965, the 23-year-old Joao even decided to attend a Bible institute for three years so he could become more involved in the church. "I wanted to be able to preach, to lead the young people, to teach Sunday school," he says. But after graduating from the Bible institute in 1968, he received a call from God to the pastoral ministry. "I resisted the call. I had no intention of being a pastor," he says.

> ***"We are more interested in the person's lifestyle than the amount of water that is used in a baptism. We teach that conversion makes a difference in your life."***
>
> Joao Fernando de Andrade

Ten years later, Joao says his decision to reject God's call was causing "a tremendous conflict in my heart. I told God I knew what God wanted, but I didn't want it. I'm thankful that God treated me with mercy, and I was called to serve as pastor at the Interlagos Church."

At the beginning, it was not an easy job. "The church was going through a difficult period. There were only 18 members. There were no men or children in the church," he says. "While the situation made me cry, it also convinced me of my calling."

Today the Interlagos Church has 200 members. Between 1992 and 1993, the membership doubled. "Now we have so much growth. It is a miracle," he says. He notes that most new members are from other denominations—Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian and Pentecostal.

Gold tooth: People are attracted to the Interlagos Mennonite Church because of its doctrine and style of leadership. "Many traditional churches are going through a charismatic phase. Some also advocate that health and wealth are a sign from God. One group even says that if a person has a gold tooth, it is a blessing from God," he says. "Often the pastors of these churches have been involved in immoral activities."

As a result, "people feel betrayed," he says, noting that once when an Evangelical Free church closed down, its entire membership transferred to the Interlagos Church.

Joao is thankful that those who are disillusioned find hope in the Mennonite church. However, he also admits it is "frightening" at times because people come from such varied theological backgrounds.

In order to address the diversity of views, Joao asks all newcomers to attend a class where "we talk frankly about who we are as a church and what our expectations are. It allows people to get to know us."

On an average, first-time attenders spend two to three months in the class before they are asked if they want to stay with the church, spend more time in the class or leave the church. So far, no one has decided to leave the church, he says.

"We are more interested in the person's lifestyle than the amount of water that is used in a baptism. We teach that conversion makes a difference in your life," Joao says. The church asks its members to abstain from drugs, cigarettes and alcohol, to be honest in their jobs, to practice pacifism in all their relationships and to commit themselves to a 10 percent tithe.

"Other churches do not teach the gospel. People are not held accountable. If the pastor blows, people fall down. There is an exaggerated emphasis on power that is not biblical," he says. "I believe that as a pastor I am here to serve the church. My authority should come from an anointing by the Lord," Joao says.

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church. She traveled in Brazil in April.

Convinced Mennonites

Dissatisfied with their previous church experience, two young Brazilians find themselves at home in a Mennonite church.

Carla Reimer

When Heraclydes de Souza and Aurinete Oliveira first started attending the Janga Mennonite Church in Paulista a few years ago, they were a little scared. "You have to be careful, more than 1,000 sects exist here without biblical foundations. Some sects just want your money. So you see a new name and you are afraid," says Aurinete.

The married couple decided to give the Mennonite church a chance because they were disillusioned with the Baptist church they were attending. They also had recently moved into the neighborhood where the Janga Church is located.

Baptists who 'turned out right': *Aurinete Oliveira and Heraclydes de Souza*

Not only did Heraclydes and Aurinete have to face their own doubts, they had to defend their decision to their Baptist friends, too. But after Aurinete attended a number of Sunday school classes and worship services, she was convinced that the Mennonite church was where she belonged. She was particularly impressed with the emphasis on biblical study.

Heraclydes, however, found he had a few more reservations. So he asked the pastor to lend him some books about Mennonite history and beliefs. After plowing through information about the early Anabaptists, he also was convinced. "Now when I see our Baptist friends, I tell them that a Mennonite is a Baptist who turned out right.

"What Baptists write on paper and what they practice are not the same," he says. "People took high salaries in the Baptist church; they used their power for personal gain."

At the Baptist church they attended, he recalls how the older members liked to order the younger people around: "They wanted to keep the traditions; they called what we wanted to do heresy. They prohibited us from clapping our hands during the worship services, even on the young people's Sunday. This was their attitude, despite the fact that we were the ones who brought visitors to the church."

He adds, "In the Baptist church, we had to fight. Here there is love because everyone participates."

Aurinete agrees: "The pastor doesn't differentiate between people. He treats people equally."

The couple also likes the Mennonite emphasis on social issues. "The Anabaptists in the 16th century stood for what was right. If the church doesn't involve itself in politics, it loses its prophetic voice," Heraclydes says. Many Pentecostal churches only preach about the future, he says. "Politicians manipulate churches like that to agree with everything they say; they tell them to vote for them in elections."

> **"If the church doesn't involve itself in politics, it loses its prophetic voice."**
>
> Heraclydes de Souza

In contrast, he notes that the pastor at the Janga Church did not allow the politicians to campaign at the church. "The pastoral message focuses on reform and challenges structures of the country," he says.

Editor's note: *Since the time of the interview, Heraclydes de Souza and Aurinete Oliveira have legally separated.*

Letters

Agree to disagree?

Conflict may not be bad, and dialogue is certainly necessary to come into agreement. But when it becomes angry conflict it is called strife. James 3:16 says that where there is strife there is every evil work. Strife opens the door for the devil to step into the situation, therefore strife is bad. It is time to unify the body of Christ.

I believe Jesus will not come back until his body is unified. I'm not just talking about unifying the Mennonites. I'm talking about unifying his entire body—all born-again Christians. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "I beseech you ... that you all speak the same thing." Look at verse 12, where Paul is criticizing the people for saying, I am of Menno Simons; I am of Martin Luther; I am of John Wesley. Back to verse 10, Paul says, "Be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment." 1 Corinthians 3:3 says that if we are operating in strife we are yet carnal. If we operate in the Spirit we should be able to discuss conflict without it turning into strife and further division. If we operate in the unconditional love of God we can and will come into agreement. There is only one truth and that is recorded in the Bible.

It is time we stop calling ourselves Mennonites and start calling ourselves followers of Christ. I was born and raised a Mennonite, but I am not following Menno Simons; I am following Jesus Christ through the holy Word of God, the Bible. I believe unity will happen, not only unity of the faith but also unity of doctrine to the point where we are all speaking the same thing. It will be the greatest miracle God has ever done, but when it happens we will take this world for Jesus Christ and usher in his second coming. *Mickey Zerger, Inman, Kan.*

Double standard

I would admire people who work to abolish the death penalty (Aug. 23 issue) were it not for the fact that many of these same people (such as the American Civil Liberties Union) are, in other contexts, avid and eager supporters of the premeditated killing of human beings—specifically, when those human beings happen to be preterm babies.

Isn't it strange that people who can see what's wrong with executing a convicted murderer don't seem to see anything wrong with killing a completely innocent baby in an abortion?

A couple dozen convicts are executed each year in the United States, and yes, this is tragic. But several thousand babies are executed each day in this country. Amazingly, many Mennonites who find it easy to speak up on behalf of those on death row fail to utter even a word of protest on behalf of innocent babies who are sentenced to death. Some Mennonites even advocate a woman's "right" to let a doctor murder her baby.

I'll never understand this double standard. But I think we would do well to remember that the sin for which Jesus reserved his harshest condemnation was the sin of hypocrisy. *Kathy Collmer, Minneapolis, Kan.*

Thanks for responses

On behalf of the entire committee that has been working on the proposed "Confession of Faith in Mennonite Perspective," we wish to express our sincere thanks to all who forwarded written responses to the committee this year. The 242 responses fill three large loose-leaf notebooks. They came from congregations, church groups and individuals.

During the third week of August the committee met for the 14th (and longest) time in seven years. This meeting was devoted to reviewing and assessing the responses, rewriting several proposed articles, and editing and shortening the articles and commentaries. Many responses provided good counsel, useful suggestions, constructive critique and other helpful comments. We're thankful for all who examined the articles carefully and responded thoughtfully. We are especially thankful for all the responses that showed genuine care for Christian unity and faithfulness based on Scripture and informed by the best in the Anabaptist and Mennonite heritage. Even the responses that reflected a different spirit and orientation confirmed the need and potential usefulness for a new confessional statement at this time in our history.

We pray that the work of the committee, the involvement of the many people who studied the proposed draft articles, and your advice and counsel for improving them will be a means of building up the church and strengthening its witness in today's world. Thank you for your partnership in this project. *Helmut Harder and Marlin E. Miller, co-chairs, Inter-Mennonite Confession of Faith Committee*

Starving our own children

We are saddened by the letter from the Mennonite workers in Colombia in *The Mennonite* (Aug. 9 issue, page 12). When we give to other agencies who beg from us, it is like starving our own children so the neighbor children can have more. We want to support our own Commission on Overseas Mission and Commission on Home Ministries workers first. Will others join us? *Eugene and Gladys Sprunger, Berne, Ind.*

Competitive greed

It was refreshing to read Jack Stauffer's letter (Sept. 13 issue, page 10) on health care after some of the others I have read in our church papers. Some even suggested that we write to our representatives advocating that we not change our system of health care. My bias is that health care should be a right for all and not the privilege of those who can afford it.

Anyone advocating no change must be among those who are doing well with what we have and are concerned about what change may bring. I, too, am doing well with Medicare and Blue Cross/Blue Shield's Plan F supplement and as of now am in relatively good health. My premium was reduced substantially in 1993, while others of my peers, a few years older and with some health problems, had increases resulting in their costs rising to nearly twice the cost of mine—some of these people on low, fixed incomes. This is not a proper way to provide health care, but it is only where the inequities begin—it gets much worse.

Some time ago Synapses published an article about Cook County (Ill.) Hospital, where many of the poor without insurance are treated, describing conditions unbelievably deplorable when contrasted with what we are privileged to use. There are many

"Cook County Hospitals" across the United States and they continue to exist because they are desperately needed.

When investigative reporters exposed Blue Cross/Blue Shield companies in our eastern states (organized as nonprofits, avoiding taxes) for paying millions of health-care dollars to their CEOs and large sums to buy box seats at sports stadiums in order to influence the right people, they justified their actions by saying, "We operate in a competitive environment." U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, when asked why Congress does not regulate such excesses, said that what these companies are doing is clearly improper but they currently are such a large and powerful part of our health-care delivery system that, regrettably, Congress cannot act against their practices.

In hopes of curbing some of this competitive greed, many groups in our country including church coalitions, some state governments and a sizeable number of our federal representatives are considering and advocating a single-payer plan. Such a plan has satisfied consumers in Canada, kept costs down and has provided reasonable equity among providers and consumers. *Milton Goering, McPherson, Kan.*

Straightforward approach

I was recently given a gift subscription to your magazine. I enjoy the articles and the very straightforward approach to the important world issues. I look forward to the coming year and the insight your magazine articles will bring. *Mark Dowling, Hutchinson (Kan.) Correctional Facility*

Editor's note: *Contributions to the prisoner gift subscription fund may be addressed to* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Problems exist here as well

While no one would contest the seriousness of the plight of children as written about in your Sept. 13 issue of *The Mennonite*, I noticed that every article was written about children in other countries.

Could it be that it is easier to print stories about situations far away rather than to look at our own cities and small towns?

On page 5 of the issue were listed nine rights of children. I live in a town of 5,000 in rural Kansas that is conservative, mostly white, Republican and proud of it. Yet there are children in this town that lack, to some degree, at least six of those nine rights listed. I would guess we are not unique in North America.

However, I'm not willing to write about them either. *Janice Hershberger, Clay Center, Kan.*

Inside
Mennonite
The plight of
dren

Staying in tune

We are a family of four Christian Mennonites who a year ago physically moved from Newton, Kan., and Faith Mennonite Church. Although we're 1,100 miles from our homes, we remain close via *The Mennonite* and *Mennonite Weekly Review.*

Just thought we'd drop you a line of appreciation for *The Mennonite* as it keeps us in tune with happenings of the heart and spirit. *Kenneth and Jennifer (Baughman) Schmidt*

Write us at P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, fax (316) 283-0454, E-mail CompuServe 72147,2746.

From our mission workers

Chicago—Sunday, 7 a.m. Gunfire wakes me up again. It sounds much closer than it has all night. The last round of gunfire was at 5:30 this morning.

I open the curtains and see that my neighbors across the street are standing on their front porch looking down the block. Others gaze out their second-floor windows.

I pull on my overcoat and walk out into the crisp, gray morning. Immediately I see the crowd gathered at the end of the block. Sirens. Within minutes there are two, then four, then seven police cars. I walk down the block and take a closer look.

A crowd stands around a light blue car. The passenger door is open. The window is broken and glass is scattered. Beside the car sits a red car. The driver's window is smashed. All along the block people peer out their windows. You can hear the police officers. One officer tells another that there were 13 gun fatalities in the city last night.

The officer strings yellow police tape around the two cars. People say it was a drive-by shooting. No one seems to have seen anything. It is cold, and I wander back to my house.

A scream fills the air. I go back outside. From my porch I can see a short, older woman shaking her fists in the air. My neighbor has also heard the screaming and she comes out of her house. We walk toward the crowd.

Two young girls stand on either side of the screaming woman, each holding one of her arms. Their faces are wet with tears. I glance over at the cars and see a body on the ground. The young man is dead. They hoist him onto a steel gurney. The old woman screams, again and again, until she is led away. I watch for a while as the homicide unit dusts the cars for prints and searches for evidence. They say he had just come home from work. No one knew why he was shot.

God was screaming.

Later that morning I sit in the small group that meets for church in our house. We have been talking about who God is and where we see God. I say that I heard the voice of God this morning, and God was screaming. I am reminded of Jeremiah: "You have ears but you do not hear, eyes but you do not see" (Jeremiah 5:21). The voice of God cries out in anguish on the streets of this city and around the world, and we are a still too silent people.

I didn't know this young man, but somehow I miss him. The silence of his absence is deafening, but in time that too will fade away. Things are not the same nor should they be. I can only whisper, "God forgive us, for we do not know what we do." *Terry Rempel, Pilsen Mennonite Voluntary Service unit*

Speaking out

I love President Clinton

A card-carrying Republican calls for civility.

Donald W. Fry

I love President Clinton. I am a card-carrying Republican, conservative, vigorously anti-abortion, oppose invading nations, and I voted for George Bush in the last election, but I love President Clinton. Not only do I love him, but I pray for him and desire God's best for him.

Barring an unforeseen miracle, I will vote against President Clinton in the next election. In spite of this, I will continue to write words of encouragement in letters to the president even while I exhort him to change his mind on many issues. I will not jeer the president during speeches, nor lampoon him from the pulpit. Should he and Hillary show up at my church door, they would be welcomed and loved. After the worship service, they would be welcome to be our honored guests for lunch.

To many in the mostly Republican and heavily Mennonite area of Lancaster County, Pa., this will sound like hypocrisy at best and compromise of the faith at worst. I would contend, however, that I have neither been hypocritical nor have I been guilty of compromise. What I am attempting to do is live my political life by the same biblical principles that I try to live in the other spheres of my life.

The reason I make this point is due to an increasing tendency by the media, both political parties and even highly visible Christian leaders to attack our presidents. Any scent of scandal that can be discerned (or invented) is scrutinized and magnified to its disgusting maximum. If a way can be found to disgrace or embarrass our president, it is pursued far beyond a reasonable extent. This leaves the president in a position where he spends more time bobbing and weaving to avoid vicious jabs than actually doing the important work he was elected to do.

A Christian has no right to act in such a vulturous way toward the leader of their nation. This is particularly true for Christians who have a biblically centered Anabaptist understanding of the faith. I am amazed that a Christian can read Romans 13:1-2 and 1 Timothy 2:1-4 yet see no inconsistency in enjoying, encouraging and even repeating the buffoonery of someone like Rush Limbaugh. Or that Christians will respond with financial gifts to "Christian ministries" that seem obsessed with slandering the president and his wife. If the apostle Paul was led by God to forbid attacking even the demonic leaders of his day, how much more should we refrain from such attacks today in a democratic society?

I am amazed that a Christian can read Romans 13:1-2 and 1 Timothy 2:1-4 yet see no inconsistency in enjoying, encouraging and even repeating the buffoonery of someone like Rush Limbaugh.

Scripture is clear that we are to respect and support our government officials. Yes, we respectfully decline when requested to violate God's standards. Yes, we try to change the minds of officials when they are acting contrary to God's principles. But we must remember that the president has his power because God gave it to him and that to stand in opposition to the president's authority is to stand in opposition to God.

The Christian response to government is to pray for and respect our government officials. This is true if one is Republican, Democrat, independent or whatever. Vigorously debate issues. Vote in election. By all means support those political leaders that are most likely to bring justice and righteousness. But in all cases, do this with all respect, even of political opponents. And if you are disappointed with the results of an election, respect, encourage and pray for the elected leader anyway. Politics must not be an excuse to set aside Christian love. It rather must be an opportunity to live in a way that gives witness and hope to our cynical world.

Donald W. Fry is pastor at Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Reinholds, Pa.

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Make this Thanksgiving memorable

Make your own list of things for which you are thankful.

J.B. Miller

I don't have many memories of Thanksgiving observances. I don't remember any when I was younger. In fact, I barely remember what I did on Thanksgiving in 1993.

It's not that I have a poor memory. I remember Christmases, but Thanksgivings seem to come and go without many memories. Since I didn't grow up on a farm, I never developed a strong connection between Thanksgiving and harvest, so Thanksgiving often feels like most other holidays—a welcome break from school or work.

Since moving to a more agricultural area, I am struck by how Thanksgiving is tied to our work and surrounding activities. Seeing farmers in their fields harvesting crops reminds me that I have much to be thankful for this Thanksgiving season.

For the first time in my life, if my memory holds, I decided to list for this Thanksgiving season some things for which I am particularly thankful:

- **A strong neighborhood** that nurtured me when I was young. To paraphrase an old saying, "It takes a village to raise a child." That's how it felt when I was growing up. Neighborhood adults often seemed as concerned about my well-being as my parents .
- **A church community** that served not only my spiritual needs as I was growing up but also helped form my social connections. Members of my congregation cared about me. When I went away to school, letters from these people and weekly church bulletins helped me stay in touch.

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

- **Experience at a Mennonite college** helped shape what my parents and community started. At college I learned that the sun set farther west than the Gulf of Mexico, that the church reached beyond the Ohio River and that God's people worshiped in a variety of ways. The Christian community became global to me for the first time.
- **Parents who loved me unconditionally.** I always knew that but didn't understand it fully until their deaths in 1978. Beyond this love, my parents modeled who and what they wanted me to be. My mother taught me about financial management, business ethics, cash flow, and got me interested in a career in business. She was an entrepreneur long before women were supposed to do those things. My dad, who was orphaned by the time he was 14, taught me about helping the less fortunate, about giving something back to the church and community. They both taught and modeled a life of generosity. Give to the church first, then to other needs.
- **A job that gives me a great deal of satisfaction.** Since college I've never had a job I disliked. Sure, some have been better than others, but I realize how fortunate I have been to have jobs that challenge me and employers who treat me fairly.

While Thanksgivings may not be memorable for me, I am glad we have a day set aside when we can remind ourselves of the many things that enrich our lives. But beyond developing this little list, this year I want to find a meaningful way to convey my thanks to the people and places I've mentioned. Maybe a gift of time or money to a local mission project, a telephone call on Thanksgiving to people who have shaped my life, thanking them for their support, encouraging a student to consider a Mennonite college—these are things we can do.

> **I am glad we have a day set aside when we can remind ourselves of the many things that enrich our lives.**

No doubt you have your own list of things to be thankful for. Make this Thanksgiving memorable for you and someone else.

Mennonite Central Committee invites applications for the position of:

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From guerrilla to Mennonite

This Colombian woman left the guerrilla movement to embrace pacifism.

Carla Reimer

As Rosa* serves coffee to her guests in her small apartment, there are no clues that this soft-spoken woman fought for 10 years with one of the major guerrilla groups operating in Colombia.

A member of a Mennonite church today, Rosa says she wishes she had known people committed to pacifism when she was younger. "I found out too late I had a pacifist heart," she says.

In the late 1970s, when Fidel Castro was popular in Colombia, the option of bringing about change through the guerrilla movement sounded appealing to a teenager from a poor neighborhood. "At that time, to be a part of the movement was seen with good eyes," she says. "We believed that a revolution was about to happen, like in Cuba."

Her high school teachers also were a big influence. It was considered a privilege to have political knowledge during those years," she says, noting that some of her teachers were killed for their connections with the guerrillas.

When Rosa decided in the ninth or 10th grade to join one of the guerrilla groups, "it was out of a total conviction. I wanted to construct a more just and humane world," she says. "I believed this was going to bring about change."

At first, she operated as an apprentice in the movement. She helped organize neighborhood youth and women, spread political graffiti and stole items such as cars, clothing, books and medicine. "We didn't say we stole; instead we said 'recuperated,'" she says.

Later she learned how to handle weapons, make bombs and rob banks. While some guerrillas, such as the M-19, met openly, the guerrilla group Rosa belonged to held secret meetings. "We met in cell groups with a maximum of five members. We didn't know each other's real names. Sometimes we would wear masks or partially cover our faces," she says. "This was to help protect our identities in case one of us was imprisoned and questioned."

The guerrillas were constantly on the move to avoid being arrested or killed. Due to the dangers they often formed close relationships. "We talked a lot about personal problems because we knew the risks. We knew that any moment we could be gone, disappear," she says.

Fear: While Rosa was prepared to face violence at the hands of the military, she never imagined that her life would be at risk due to threats from the guerrilla movement. But after about 10 years with the guerrillas, in the late 1980s, she no longer trusted those around her.

> **"It has not always been easy to be a pacifist. But my Christian beliefs and the church have helped."**

Her problems began when she asked questions about the apparent discrepancies between the movement's ideals and actions. "I had the opportunity to see the errors firsthand," she says.

Sometimes it was poor decision making that put many lives in danger, including her own. But on other occasions she saw "leaders who did not fulfill the ideals and created more injustices. There were even executions of fellow workers."

Rosa also experienced fatigue. The guerrilla group she belonged to was not advancing or retreating. "It was a vicious cycle. I dreamed of a simpler life," she says, recalling how she had heard that her mother was ill and she wanted the freedom to go to visit her.

"We had strict ideals that we lived and intended to die for. But there came a time when it did not make sense to be there anymore," she says.

After a year of being disillusioned, Rosa told the leaders her feelings about the movement. "Everything exploded and they threatened to kill me, my own friends," she says. "I felt betrayed and afraid." She decided to leave the guerrillas and go into hiding. "From the moment I deserted them, I was seen as an enemy," she says.

For almost a year Rosa was on the run, staying only two to three days in one place before moving to a different location. "Not having a permanent place to live, one has to learn how to live with different people," she says. "I had few friends and no money. I tried to keep friends from the past at a distance. I almost started a new life."

Although her involvement with the guerrillas had strained her relationship with her parents, she says, "they were the only people who really gave me a hand afterward."

A new life: The transition from the guerrilla movement to leading a normal life has been complicated, Rosa says. During the last four years she has reflected a lot on her past.

Thankfully, she says, she has not had to struggle alone. Her friends in the Mennonite church have helped her. "I found people who had lived in similar circumstances. I was able to share my story with them." Rosa was attracted to Mennonites because they addressed social injustice nonviolently.

Her convictions have led her to teach pacifism in the classroom, even though she is often ostracized by her fellow teachers because she is labeled a Communist. She supplements the textbooks with readings on people such as Mahatma Gandhi.

"The first thing the students have to know and understand is that the history of this country has been a history of violence," she says. "It is a reality that you can't negate. They also need to understand how hard it is to be nonviolent when the injustices here are 100 percent. I think of pacifism as a pact of nonaggression that starts with each of us.

"I still think it is possible to have a better world, a more just and humane world. But now I don't have the idea that it can be done in 10 years."

**Rosa's real name and specific details about her life have not been used in this article in order to protect her identity.*

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church. She traveled in Colombia in April.

Eastern District debates sexuality policy

Lansdale, Pa. (GCMC)—Eastern District Conference (EDC) held a special session here Sept. 24 to discuss a proposed policy statement on human sexuality that would deny leadership credentials to those who support gay and lesbian sexual activity.

No EDC action was taken, as the meeting's purpose was to provide opportunity to discuss the issue before EDC's fall session on Oct. 29.

EDC called for the special session after proposal of the statement sparked strong debate at conference sessions in Quakertown, Pa., in April.

The policy is based on the General Conference Mennonite Church's resolution on sexuality passed in Saskatoon in 1986, which called homosexual sexual activity a sin but also called for "loving dialogue" in an "ongoing search for discernment."

The new EDC policy declares the "Bible as the authoritative and trustworthy guide for moral values and ethical decisions." It affirms both marriage and singleness while denouncing sexual immorality, including pre- and extramarital and homosexual sexual activity. The policy calls for compassionate attitudes but maintains that the church cannot grant "leadership credentials to or recognize the leadership credentials of persons who advocate or practice conduct to the contrary."

Representing the ministerial committee, Robert Gerhart, pastor at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa., and former EDC president, explained that the statement was not drafted "in response to any specific persons or particular congregations" but rather to articulate and define EDC's stance for themselves, new members and ministerial candidates. "It is not a tool to be used as a weapon or the basis for a witch hunt," he said. He also clarified that the statement "deals with [sexual] practice, not preference, behaviors, not orientations."

Support: Eighteen of the 26 conference congregations were represented and each read a prepared statement expressing their church's response to the proposed policy. The majority affirmed the policy. "We believe such a policy is needed in view of our society's compulsion toward sexual sins," reported Michael Sutberry, pastor at United Mennonite Church, Quakertown. Greg Stenson, pastor at Springfield Mennonite Church, Pleasant Valley, Pa., commented that the policy "treats all sexual immorality fairly." Saucon Mennonite Church, Coopersburg, Pa., represented by pastor John Kulp, found the policy statement to be "gracious to those who find themselves in the awful bondage of sexual sin and immorality."

> **'We believe such a policy is needed in view of our society's compulsion toward sexual sins.'**
>
> ***Michael Sutberry***

Those congregations who supported the policy emphasized the need for the church at large as well as individuals to love and accept all people; however, for membership, they said people with immoral sexual practices must repent and experience redemption. In turn, Stephen Strunk, pastor at Church of the Good Samaritan, Holland, Pa., asserted that churches must realize the "importance of forgiveness for those who have repented."

Questions: The policy did not go unquestioned. Calvin Yoder, pastor at Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa., asked whether a policy statement is necessary if we believe the Bible to be our authoritative guide. Warren Grasse, Indian Valley Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa., questioned both how the policy will be enforced and how future action based on this policy can be redemptive in nature. Many suggested the inclusion of scriptural references to support the document. Additionally, some requested that the confession section, which acknowledges shortcomings, be reworded positively to express goals

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A group of Christian musicians in Clearbrook, B.C., raised $4,500 for Rwandan relief. The group performed classical music Aug. 26 at King Road Menno-nite Brethren Church Chapel for a crowd of 200. One small child brought a bagful of coins she had saved for the children of Rwanda. (MCC Canada)

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Two hundred drunken demonstrators supported by the Haitian military marched through the southern Haitian city of Jeremie Sept. 8. Christian Peacemaker Teams' Haiti workers are based in Jeremie. After the march, people asked CPT members if they planned to leave Jeremie. CPT member Rebecca Logan said CPT will remain in the area as long as its efforts are useful.

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The Central District Conference ministerial committee withdrew ordination credentials of two ministers at a March 1 meeting. Both Conrad Wetzel and Les Tolbert were under suspension since May 1992 for unrelated actions. Wetzel's confession to sexual misconduct and Tolbert's reported substance abuse resulted in the suspension and withdrawal of their credentials. The committee is working to put in place a response team to deal with abuse of power and misconduct of pastoral leaders in the district. (*The Central District Reporter*)

Pleasant Point Mennonite Church, a small church about 10 miles south of Clavet, Sask., changed its constitution in January to allow people to retain membership at another church and join Pleasant Point Church. As a result, 13 new members joined the church.

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Mennonite Central Committee has joined Lutheran World Relief to provide more than 2 million antibiotic tablets to help fight pneumonic plague in India. MCC's share is valued at between $6,000 ($8,200 Cdn.) and $7,000 ($9,600 Cdn.), depending on shipping costs. Glen Miller, MCC India country representative, says the mortality rate without treatment is as high as 50 percent. With early treatment the rate falls to 5 percent.

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Hope Mennonite Church, Fort Worth, Texas, recently purchased land for a future church building. The 2.4 acre plot is located in Hurst, a northeast Fort Worth suburb. The vote on the decision to purchase was unanimous. Hope began in 1984 as a group of 10. Currently, meeting in a Seventh-day Adventist Church building, they have a membership of 28 and average attendance of 50.

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At the request of residents of Bethlehem, Jerusalem and the Christian village of Beit Sahour, Christian Peacemaker Teams is preparing to send delegations to the West Bank to help local residents curb encroaching settlements. A Jewish settlement of 4,500 housing units is planned for land adjacent to Bethlehem. The settlement construction in Abu Ghoneim is the largest since the Cairo peace accords that gave autonomy to Jericho and Gaza. The future of settlements will influence the struggle for control of Jerusalem and will affect future efforts for peace. People wishing to join the CPT delegation should contact CPT at (312) 455-1199.

regarding sexual morality.

Opposition: The Mennonite Congregation of Boston, Somerville, Mass., represented by Phil Stoltzfus, opposed the proposed policy and suggested that stance on this issue be left to congregational autonomy. He said EDC's statement "dictates one particular reading of the Bible" and would "create further divisions in the conference between congregations."

John Linscheid, Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, admitted that their congregation has had to "agree to disagree on this issue in order to maintain the unity of the body of Christ."

> **'[This] looks like a statement that wants to cut off dialogue and wants to exclude any positions that differ.'**
>
> ***John Linscheid***

The congregation at First Mennonite, Allentown, Pa., agreed that their church was too diverse to come to a consensus. Furthermore, they questioned the need for a policy beyond the GCMC Saskatoon resolution, especially given the limited scriptural references to homosexuality in the Bible. They feel the issue is "not central" to Christianity. Bethel Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., and West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., concurred with the use of the Saskatoon resolution.

Individuals were also able to present prepared statements. Joe Kotva, pastor at First Mennonite, Allentown, challenged EDC's general use of Scriptures, arguing that the tendency is to "squelch dissenting voices with vague and generic views of Scripture," and adding that all views of Scripture, not just dissenting views, are "interpretations."

For Linscheid the language of the statement is not "compassionate … caring … or loving," and the policy "looks like a statement that wants to cut off dialogue and wants to exclude any positions that differ." He said he feels a need to "acknowledge each other's attempts at being faithful" and charged that passing this policy will "rip apart the body of Christ … [and] do damage to people."

The policy will be reported on at the fall session of the EDC, hosted by Springfield Mennonite Church in Quakertown, but it is not on the agenda for final action. *Sharon Fransen*

CHM sets new staff roles

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) took action during an executive session at its Sept. 16-17 meeting to assign new staff responsibilities in light of the termination of the position of secretary for peace and justice effective Jan. 31, 1995. The position was cut due to budgetary constraints.

The staff reorganization will take place Feb. 1, 1995. CHM is a program of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Marco Guete, secretary for Hispanic ministries, will work with resourcing congregations for witness. He will coordinate efforts to provide special resources to non-English-speaking churches, especially Spanish and Chinese congregations, and evangelism and peace for all General Conference churches.

Marilyn Miller, secretary for evangelism and church development, will coordinate witness beyond the local congregation. She will provide church-planting resources to area conferences and will work with denominational peace witness, including Christian Peacemaker Teams and war-tax issues.

Chuck Neufeld, director of Mennonite Voluntary Service, will coordinate personnel for witness. His work will include Mennonite Voluntary Service, Youth Venture and Abraham and Sarah Caravans.

Other CHM staff will also contribute to the work of these three areas.

In addition, Miller will provide leadership to peace and justice work beyond the local congregation and Lois Barrett, CHM executive secretary, will work with congregational peace education. Some positions on peace agency boards will be filled by volunteers, who will consult with CHM staff. *God and Caesar*, a quarterly peace and justice newsletter, will no longer be published.

"We want congregations to know that although we will have less staff, we will still be providing peace resources and opportunities for peace witness," said Barrett.

Protests in India threaten Woodstock School

Mussoorie, India (GCMC)—On Sept. 15 an estimated 2,000 protesters dispersed across the main campus of Woodstock School here, hoping to avoid further confrontation with police, writes Ron Flaming, who serves as principal with the support of the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

For about the last two months, Mussoorie and other towns located in the Himalayan foothills have experienced growing political unrest. Students have held countless protests against a newly expanded government policy that requires universities to reserve a portion of their seats for students from the lower castes and classes. Those who want the hill region to become a separate state have joined forces with the students.

At the time of the Sept. 15 protest, the Woodstock administrative staff were holding a meeting to decide whether it was safe to allow the elementary and high school students of this Christian international boarding school to leave the school grounds for the weekend. Woodstock School is located about one mile from Mussoorie.

An employee interrupted their meeting to tell them that protesters were marching by the school on their way to Mussoorie. According to eye-

Newton churches hold mission fest

Dave Linscheid

North Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Viola Ediger (left), former mission worker in Japan, teaches Beaty Robb of Bethel College Mennonite Church here how to use chopsticks. Beaty received the lesson at a two-day international mission festival at Bethel College here Oct. 1-2. Peanuts, piñatas and Paraguayan music were all part of the festival. About 500 people attended. Organized by eight area General Conference (GC) Mennonite congregations, the festival highlighted the work of the GC Commission on Overseas Mission through music, stories, food and displays. Other activities included an African-style worship service. The theme was "Calling All the Children Home."

Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Church will hold a 40th anniversary celebration Nov. 12-13. For information call the church at (708) 627-5310.

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Christian Peacemaker Teams and New Call to Peacemaking will hold a joint Peacemaker Congress in Chicago May 26-29, 1995, in Chicago. Elise Boulding, a Quaker, and Hubert Brown, a Mennonite, will be the main speakers. Call CPT at (312) 455-1199 or NCP at (717) 859-1958.

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Two General Conference-affiliated colleges have received recognition from U.S. magazines. Bluffton (Ohio) College has been ranked 88th in the nation by *Money Guide 1995: Best College Buys Now*, published by *Money* magazine. Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., has been ranked fifth in the Midwest among regional liberal arts colleges by *U.S. News & World Report*. Both studies compared the cost of attending the institution to various indicators of the quality of education.

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Jason Lee of Calgary is this year's recipient of the Canadian Japanese-Mennonite Scholarship. Mennonite Central Committee Canada created the scholarship in 1985 as an expression of regret for injustices suffered by Japanese-Canadians at the hands of Mennonites during World War II. The scholarship is jointly sponsored by MCCC and the National Association of Japanese-Canadians. Lee, a Master of Arts student in anthropology at the University of Calgary, will use the $1,000 award to further his research in ethnicity. He is interested in how ethnic identity is passed from one generation to the next. He will use the Japanese-Canadian experience in southern Alberta as a basis for research.

Cedar Falls (Iowa) Mennonite Church has moved to a new meeting place in Cedar Falls. Members dedicated the new meeting place Sept. 11.

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Bluffton (Ohio) College National Alumni Association presented service awards to Muriel T. Stackley, a former student, and Darvin Luginbuhl, a former faculty member. Stackley, a 1958 BC graduate, received the NAA Alumni Distinguished Service Award for her contributions in the field of journalism. Stackley edited *The Mennonite* from 1986 to 1992. Luginbuhl, a 1946 BC graduate, received the NAA Service Award. He taught art at the college and has contributed his efforts to relief sales and service organizations.

• • •

Curtis Bedsworth, a member of First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., has been awarded the Carmen Velasquez Memorial Award from the Indiana Governor's Task Force on Migrant Affairs. The award is given each year to someone who has made significant contributions to helping migrant workers. Bedsworth has supported a food-sharing program and migrant ministries for years through the church.

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Delegates from General Conference Mennonite churches in Alberta and Saskatchewan met at Zion Mennonite Church, Swift Current, Sask., to set policy for Swift Current Bible Institute and celebrate the start of the school year. George Richert, president of Menno Simons College, Winnipeg, told delegates of the need for places like SCBI. "Our schools," he said, "are needed to remind us of our connection to church and God." SCBI president Ray Friesen noted an increased student body and said this is the first year that the number of students from Manitoba equals the number from Alberta.

witness accounts, said Flaming, the police charged with their sticks after the protesters failed to stop at the barricade the police had set up near the school entrance.

"Mayhem broke loose. People were running everywhere across our campus. Others were jumping, falling or being shoved off the road [and] down the mountain. Windows of the buses and trucks were being broken by the police. ... Suddenly the campus felt vulnerable," wrote Flaming Sept. 18. None of the Woodstock staff or students, who were in the dorms away from the main campus, was injured.

A number of the participants at the Sept. 15 protest were not as fortunate. Most of their injuries were broken bones and head injuries, said Flaming, noting that the staff helped out as they could after the protest had subsided. Although the protesters told the media that people had died, Flaming said he and other staff did not see any dead.

Still he reported that following the protest "it was a sober night with a lot of soul-searching and prayer. ... If the police had resorted to the use of guns again we could have well been caught in the cross fire. The agitated protesters could easily have turned their anger upon the school. ... We are thankful for God's protection in a situation that could have been disastrous."

A Sept. 2 protest in Mussoorie had also turned violent when police opened fire on the protesters. One police officer and six to eight protesters were killed, and about 30 people received gunshot wounds.

In addition to the protests, there have been numerous curfews and an increased police presence in Mussoorie. Local officials also have tried numerous times to pressure Flaming to close Woodstock School as a show of support for the protesters. Many schools in the area have temporarily shut down due to verbal threats and the destruction of school property.

On Oct. 2, after a week of relative calm, police burned about 30 buses and killed at least another 10 people who were on their way to a protest in Delhi, said Flaming in an Oct. 4 phone interview.

Even though the political situation remains tense, Flaming and other Woodstock staff have decided to keep the school open. "The fact that we as a community have been able to support a decision to continue is an act of God's presence and guidance. At a time like this, it would be easy for us as a community to be torn apart," he wrote.

Flaming is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.
Carla Reimer

Saskatchewan minister loses his credentials

Waterloo, Ont. (*Mennonite Reporter*)—The Pastoral Leadership Committee of the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan has suspended the ministerial credentials of Henry Reimer, pastor at First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon, for a minimum of one year. The suspension became effective July 20.

In dealing with this case the conference used "Guidelines for Discipline Regarding Ministerial Credentials," a document adopted at its February 1993 annual sessions. The document was jointly developed by the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

In early April the Pastoral Leadership Committee appointed a four-person intervention team to investigate allegations brought against Reimer by a woman in his church. He was placed on leave with pay.

The team's findings and recommendations were summarized by the Pastoral Leadership Committee in a report to the church July 16 and 17.

According to this report, the allegations of sexual intimacy and abusive control "remain in dispute," since the team found a lack of "confirming evidence" and heard "contradictory testimony." The team concluded that the relationship of the pastor and the complainant was "one of pathological co-dependency."

According to the Pastoral Leadership Committee, the intervention team held the pastor responsible for three of the ethical violations under section III of the conference guidelines: "(1) violations of confidentiality, (2) financial ... irregularities in either personal or professional relationships, (3) deviance from Christian norms regarding sexuality ... with a parishioner, client ... involving the minister's professional roles and responsibilities."

In the week following its report to First Mennonite Church, the Pastoral Leadership Committee announced its decision to suspend Reimer's ministerial credentials.

Both Reimer and the complainant have filed an appeal with the executive committee of the Saskatchewan conference. The conference chair, Henry Harder, said the executive is setting up a hearing committee, in accordance with its guidelines.

At a congregational meeting on Aug. 21, members of First Mennonite Church decided to look for another interim pastor. Irvin Schmidt served as interim from April through July, while the intervention team was doing its investigation. *Ron Rempel*

COE sets solo course with youth products

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan., will assume sole publishing responsibility for *With* and *YouthGuide* effective Feb. 1, 1995.

The Commission on Education (COE) of the General Conference Mennonite Church made the decision at its Sept. 29-Oct. 2 meeting at Swan Lake Camp near Viborg, S.D. COE members also agreed that Faith & Life Press and Brethren Press, Elgin, Ill., will cooperatively publish youth Bible studies for use in fall 1995.

In a separate interview, COE chair Erick Sawatzky, Elkhart, Ind., said the mood during discussion about these youth resources was "upbeat. The package the staff presented seemed fairly realistic."

It will cost Faith & Life Press a total of $181,477 annually to publish the three youth resources. Income from sales is projected to exceed expenses. "The result of intensive staff work has given us a package that we are confident will meet the needs of youth and their leaders," said Norma Johnson, Faith & Life Press publisher.

Sawatzky admitted there was some concern about the impact of having two Mennonite youth curricula in the marketplace—one from Faith & Life Press and Brethren Press, the other from Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa. In May, Mennonite Publishing House announced it would no longer cooperatively publish youth curriculum, *With* and *YouthGuide* with Faith & Life Press due to financial losses and plans to publish its own youth curriculum.

The potential for having two competing youth curricula is, "an embarrassment at a time when we are talking about integration of the two denominations," said Sawatzky.

COE also examined possibly holding joint youth conventions with the Mennonite Church. Abe Bergen, COE director for youth ministry, noted that the youth conventions have a higher importance in the Mennonite Church (MC) compared with the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC). Over 50 percent of MC youth attend their biennial conventions, while only about 10 percent of GC youth attend their triennial conventions.

"Youth conventions are important. ... However, they should not dominate the youth ministry agenda for youth and leaders. Equal effort needs to be given to leadership training of both youth and adults and the development of resources for congregations," said Bergen in a presentation to the commission. COE decided to ask the GC youth ministry council for guidance about the content and frequency of future youth conventions.

COE also discussed two restructuring proposals from the GC General Board. One recommends a shift from three commissions to two—a resources commission and a mission commission. The other recommends the formation of a U.S. conference parallel to the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

While Sawatzky said he felt it was difficult to talk about the proposals without knowing more details, such as financial limitations, Helen Kruger, Osler, Sask., said she saw the proposal to create two national conferences as positive.

"It would make it easier for Canada and the United States to work together because they would be equal. Many have felt that money was flowing south, but the resources weren't coming back," she said. "The main benefit is that the resource people would be closer to their constituency; there would be greater ownership."

COE approved a motion in favor of the two proposals with the following three stipulations: (1) that the resource commission have Christian education as its focus; (2) that the resource commission not be asked to do its own fund raising; and (3) that there be a minimum of 3.75 full-time equivalency staff devoted to Christian education. *Carla Reimer*

Tourism is the world's second largest industry, employing 204 million people worldwide, or one in every nine workers. *Tourism: Paradise in Peril*, a study guide from Church World Service, reports that by the year 2000, tourism is likely to be the world's most important economic activity. The guide reports that Americans spend more on their leisure than they do on defense.

• • •

Dentures are left behind at English churches more than any other item, according to a survey of 400 English clergy reported in the *Guardian Weekly*. "I suppose people take them out when they go to receive communion," said one. (*Context*)

• • •

***Mennonot*, a magazine "for Mennos on the margins," lambasted church conferences in its fall 1994 issue for turning up the heat on churches that allow participation of homosexual people. The magazine suggested that conferences exercise equal discipline for congregations that allow other kinds of sin, and offered a list of unchecked sins to be disciplined, including churches with members who do not recycle garbage, with members who cheered on the United States during the Gulf War and with members that believe women should not preach or become pastors.**

• • •

Canadian and Mexican Mennonites this summer assisted the struggling Mennonite Colony of La Batea in Zacatecas, Mexico. In spring, Mennonite Central Committee Canada issued an appeal for the colony of 850 people, which has suffered three consecutive crop failures. Mennonite colonists in Mexico donated 69 tons (76 metric tons) of oats, beans, wheat and corn, $9,800 ($13,800 Cdn.) and clothing. Canadians donated over $22,700 ($32,000 Cdn.). The money will serve as an interest-free loan. Families receiving seed will be asked to return the same amount to MCC after their harvest.

The world's population has hit 5.6 billion and will reach 7.9 billion by 2020, according to the United States' Bureau of the Census. Ninety percent of the new population will come from Asia, Latin America and Africa. Despite the AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa, that region will grow from 572 million to 1.1 billion. Today the median age in the non-Western world is 23, compared with 35 in the West.

• • •

Judges in Italy have fined a 50-year-old man for dangerous driving after he handed the controls of his car over to God, reports *De Morgen*. A judge heard how the man let go of his steering wheel and cried, "God, can you drive?" The man's car ended up in a ditch, and his lawyer cited "religious dilemma" as the reason for the bizarre action. The prosecution lawyer pointed out that "God is not a legally insured driver and has never passed an official test." (*Context*)

• • •

In the United States, Canada and five Western European countries, newspapers and television news are rated higher than the church in terms of being believable and exerting a good influence, according to a survey by the Times Mirror Center for the People & the Press. Only in Mexico did the church get higher marks than the news media. Canadians put significantly less trust in the church than Americans. Forty-seven percent of Canadians saw the church as credible compared with 60 percent of Americans. In Mexico 79 percent viewed the church as believable. Majorities in all three countries said the church was a good influence. Less than 40 precent of people in Great Britain and Italy thought the church was a good influence. The survey has a 3 percent margin of error in most countries. (*The Christian Century*)

Media Cuba: myth or reality?

Jack Suderman

The media is presenting a monolithic view of Cuba. This view can be summarized in four points:

- The dictatorial Communist/socialist system in Cuba, previously shored up by the Soviet Union, has failed.
- Castro, the recalcitrant dictator, is brutally hanging onto power.
- Castro's regime, a dinosaur that has failed to change with the times, has become irrelevant.
- The democratic capitalistic system again proves superior to all other political/economic experiments.

However, Castro and Cuba must be judged within the Caribbean, Central and South American contexts, not within a North/Atlantic context. Cuba is not the only country that has received massive foreign aid and investment. Others include Honduras, Haiti, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Colombia, Jamaica, Panama.

Keeping people down: In these countries, the plug has been pulled on foreign subsidies without fear of popular uprisings for one reason: *The trickle-down theory has not worked.* These subsidies, generally, have been siphoned into the pockets of small ruling classes that benefit or suffer from greater or less foreign subsidy. These resources are more often used for the repression of the population than for its benefit. The masses in these countries continue in conditions of absolute poverty. Foreign subsidies can increase or decrease without affecting this majority.

Even conservative organizations like the World Bank, the World Health Organization and other United Nations organizations acknowledge that Cuba, under Castro, has been different. The majority in Cuba did benefit from foreign capital: Cuba led the Caribbean and Latin American worlds in levels of literacy, health care, housing, levels of meaningful employment, food distribution and decreases in crime, prostitution, drug problems.

What is happening, then, is that two or three generations of people, used to the amenities of a good standard of living, are suddenly facing these benefits no longer continuing.

If we look at the regimes in the Caribbean and Latin America that the United States has supported (the Duvalier family in Haiti, Fulgencio Baptista in pre-Castro Cuba, the Somoza family in Nicaragua, Alfredo Stroessner Matiauda in Paraguay, the military juntas in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, violent oligarchies in Colombia, and Manuel Noriega in Panama), we see that the benefits received by these regimes have not trickled down to the masses as in Cuba. Rather, the U.S.-backed governments continued repression designed to keep the poor down.

Cuba's success: So perhaps Castro's downfall was his success. He succeeded in using foreign funds to benefit the Cuban people; he succeeded in providing his people with a standard of living that the masses in other Caribbean and Latin American countries only dream about. When these Cubans are asked to go back to the standard of living that continues to be normal in other countries, they say no. Understandably they seek in the United States a standard of life they have been used to in Cuba.

Put Bolivia or Guatemala 90 miles from American soil, add an open emigration and an inconsistent immigration policy and see what happens. Look at what has happened along the Mexican-American border for years. Millions of Mexicans and Central Americans have come to seek a better future. People vote with their feet.

The ease with which the media can take the Cuban exodus and turn it into an ideological battle—demonstrating the victory of good, democratic, capitalistic forces over evil, dictatorial, Communist ones—simplifies and contradicts Caribbean and Latin American realities. It is one more example of how the cultural and political preconceptions of the media perpetrate the superficial political discernment of the public that it serves.

Jack Suderman, who serves with the Commission on Overseas Mission, has been involved with Latin America for 15 years. He has had contact with the Cuban churches and taught courses there.

Record

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MBM—Mennonite Board of Missions

DEATHS

C.B. Friesen died Oct. 3 at age 91. He had been pastor at Mennonite Church of Butterfield (Minn.); Herold Church, Cordell, Okla.; Walton (Kan.) Church, Emmanuel Church, Moundridge, Kan.; Greenfield Church, Carnegie, Okla., and Faith Church, Greensburg, Kan. He was a member of First Church, Newton, Kan.

C.J. Warkentin died Sept. 9 at age 95. He had served as minister and elder of Ebenfeld Church, Herschel, Sask., and elder of other area churches.

MINISTERS

Palmer Becker will pastor Calvary Church, Aurora, Ore., beginning Nov. 15.

John Dey has begun as pastor at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Edna Dyck has been serving as pastoral assistant at Shalom Church, Newton, Kan.

Rosella Epp began Oct. 1 as co-pastor with Calvin Yoder at Zion Church, Souderton, Pa.

Paul Isaak will be pastor at Deer Creek (Okla.) Church beginning Feb. 1, 1995.

Chester Slagell is interim pastor at First Church, Clinton, Okla.

Julia Wagler served in the Ministry Inquiry Program this summer at Mennonite Church of Normal, Ill.

Steve Yoder will be associate pastor at Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., effective Nov. 15.

WORKERS

Angela Dyck, Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg, began an MBM term in September as a nurse at a health-care center in Evansville, Ind.

Lowell Eastman, Comins Church, Fairview, Mich., has begun a one-year term with MBM working as a farm co-op assistant in Mashulaville, Miss.

Joey Falk, Erb Street Church, Waterloo, Ont., has begun a one-year term with MBM working as an adult day-care aide in Richmond, Va.

Eric and **Kathy Fast**, Altona (Man.) Church, COM, Mennonite Central Committee and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission workers in Botswana, returned to North America July 19. They are living in Winnipeg.

Julie Hart has been named assistant professor of sociology at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Leanne Peters, First Church, Winnipeg, left Oct. 3 for a 2 1/2 year COM term in Japan. She will teach English classes sponsored by the Mennonite churches in Miyazaki, Japan.

Bryan Reber has been named assistant professor of communication arts at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Karen Schlabaugh has been named associate professor of music at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Lisa Janzen Scott has been appointed instructor in mathematics at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Karen Siebert has been named director of public information/news service at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Allan van Asselt has been named assistant professor of physics and chemistry at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Eastman

Peters

A Roper survey reported in *Business Ethics* has found that 78 percent of consumers say they would choose a product made by a company that contributes to social causes over one made by a company that doesn't. (*The Marketplace*)

• • •

A conference, Moving Toward Healing: Sexual Abuse and the Church, will be held Nov. 11-12 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. The conference, for "survivors and those who care," is sponsored by area Mennonite organizations and Mennonite Central Committee groups. For information, write to P.O. Box 1237, Goshen, IN 46527, or call (219) 533-1044.

Hesston College Academic Dean

Hesston (Kan.) College invites applications and nominations for the position of academic dean, beginning July 1, 1995.

The dean serves as the chief academic officer for a two-year college with 37 faculty members and approximately 470 students. Hesston College is an educational institution of the Mennonite Church and its mission is to lead persons toward the model of Jesus Christ as revealed in his life and teachings and toward active participation in the church.

The college seeks candidates who are deeply committed to Christian faith as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Desired qualifications include skills in administration, significant teaching experience, and the ability to lead the faculty in creative academic program development and implementation. The qualified candidate will possess an earned doctorate. The academic dean is a member of the administrative cabinet and reports to the president of the college.

Letters of application or nomination will be accepted until November 1 (or until the position is filled). Applicants should name three references (including one pastor or congregational leader) and enclose a resume. All inquiries will be held in strict confidence. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Address correspondence to:
Loren Swartzendruber, president
Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston KS 67062

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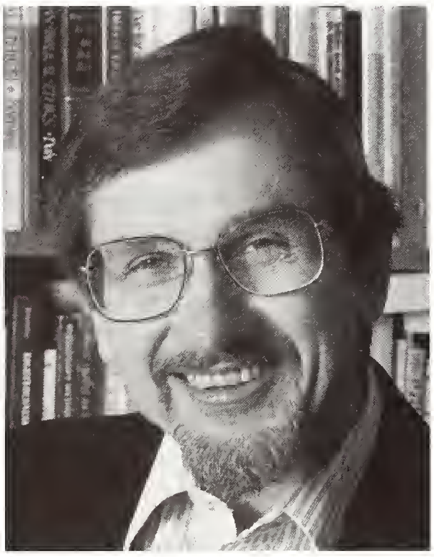

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Willard Swartley would have been a salesman, he says, if the Lord had not intervened. Instead, Willard has devoted his life to growing in knowledge of God's word, and helping others do this, too. He is a writer and editor in addition to teaching at AMBS since 1978.

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Fall releases from Herald Press

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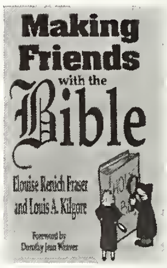
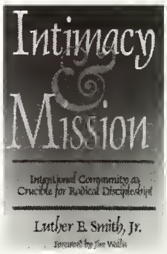
foreword by Dorothy Jean Weaver


Making Friends with the Bible
Elouise Renich Fraser and Louis A. Kilgore
Foreword by Dorothy Jean Weaver

This book is a creative, reader-friendly invitation to think anew about our relationship with the Bible. Fraser and Kilgore describe a process engaging heart, mind, body, and spirit which can move us closer, not just to the Bible, but to ourself, others, and God. Full of stories and illustrations, perceptive, warm, and personal, *Making Friends with the Bible* is for beginners as well as old friends of the Bible.
Paper, 168 pages, $9.95; in Canada $14.20.

Intimacy and Mission:
Intentional Community as Crucible for Radical Discipleship

by **Luther E. Smith, Jr.**
foreword by Jim Wallis

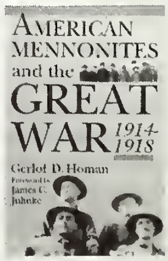


"An engrossing read as well as a sound study of five Christian religious communities—Sojourners, Church of the Messiah, Koinonia Partners, Patchwork Central, and Voice of Calvary."—*Publishers Weekly*

"I once believed that intentional Christian community would be the primary new wineskin for a transformed church. I was wrong. New forms and expressions of community are indeed essential to that transformation, but there are a myriad of models and examples. Real community is the key."—Jim Wallis, Editor, *Sojourners*
Paper, 192 pages, $12.95; in Canada $18.50.

American Mennonites and the Great War, 1914-1918

by **Gerlof D. Homan**
foreword by James C. Juhnke



The many Mennonites who did not conform suffered greatly. Particularly intense were the trials of Mennonite men who refused to serve their government as noncombatants—the only option then open to conscientious objectors. Blending sound scholarship with a gripping storyline, Homan tells the ordeal of the Mennonites who tried to remain faithful. Volume 34 in the Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History Series.
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General assistant for Spruce Lake Retreat, a Mennonite retreat center and camp in the Pocono Mountains of northeast Pennsylvania. Year-round, salaried position with housing available. Combination of waitressing, housekeeping and some kitchen work or dishwashing, depending on ability and interest.

Contact **Leanna Beiler, Spruce Lake Retreat, RR 1, Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; (717) 595-7505.**

Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College invites applications for **director of development**. The position begins this fall. The primary responsibility will be to secure the financial resources for the school. This will include updating the database for giving, soliciting funds for endowments, bursaries and current operations, coordinating fund-raising activities and assisting in financial planning. A major component of responsibility will include work away from the office contacting supporters in the constituency. The person will also serve as liaison for the RJC alumni and auxiliary. Candidates should possess effective communication and public relations skills. Computer and accounting literacy will be a definite asset.

Please direct inquires and résumés to **Erwin Tiessen, Principal, Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0; tel. (306) 232-4222, fax (306) 232-5250.**

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking a **project manager** in its Information Systems department. The right person will have a bachelor's degree and at least two to five years of managerial, professional or technical experience in application software development or acquisition and implementation, insurance, financial services, accounting or related areas. This person will also have at least one year of project management experience and possess strong skills in such areas as leadership, working with people, communications, planning and organizing. This position may require some computer programming. Technical training will be provided.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. Applicants must pass an aptitude test. MMA offers an excellent, smoke-free working environment and a competitive benefit package.

If interested, please send résumé to **Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527.**

Business manager for Spruce Lake Retreat, a Mennonite retreat center and camp in the Pocono Mountains of northeast Pennsylvania. New position, primarily financial management, plus computer maintenance. Must have accounting/bookkeeping skills and experience with MS-DOS systems. Assignment to start as soon as possible. Housing not provided.

Send résumé or contact **Paul Beiler, Spruce Lake Retreat, RR 1, Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; (717) 595-7505.**

Camp Friedenswald, a growing Mennonite camp and retreat center, is looking for people interested in six-month to two-year **voluntary service positions.** Skills and interest in two of the following areas are recommended: food preparation, housekeeping, maintenance, program (outdoor education, ropes program, etc.). Benefits include room, board, monthly stipend, living in a Christian community amid a natural setting. Positions open immediately or Jan. 1.

Contact **Doug Luginbill, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031; (616) 476-2426.**

Food service director needed at **Camp Friedenswald**, Cassopolis, Mich. The successful applicant shall possess an interest in working within a camping ministry, the ability to manage a food service program efficiently, expertise and experience in preparing quality meals for groups up to 250, and a willingness to work with volunteers. This is a full-time, salaried position with housing, health insurance and utilities provided.

Business manager or administrative assistant needed at **Camp Friedenswald**. The successful applicant shall possess an interest in working within a camping ministry, a background in business and/or accounting, an ability to work with word processing and accounting software, strong interpersonal skills, and an ability to serve people seeking retreat in the "peaceful woods." Supervisory expertise is also desired. The level of supervisory expertise will determine the exact position.

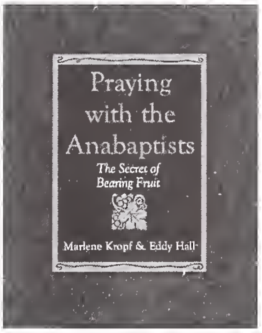
People interested in either of the above positions should send a résumé with references to **Doug Luginbill, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031; (616) 476-2426.**

After Nearly 500 Years, The Secret Is Out

Praying with the Anabaptists

The Secret of Bearing Fruit

by Marlene Kropf and Eddy Hall



The first book to clearly articulate the heritage of Anabaptist spirituality, *Praying with the Anabaptists* offers fifteen meditations and guided prayer exercises that provide direction for bearing spiritual fruit. Each meditation includes text from John 13-17, a reflection on the biblical passage, words from the early Anabaptists, and a guided prayer exercise. A companion cassette by the Chamber Singers of Eastern Mennonite University includes a hymn for each meditation and reflects the intimate Anabaptist connection of singing and prayer.

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Reviews

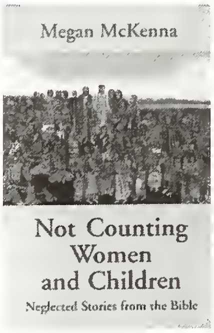
BOOKS

Renewed testaments

Not Counting Women and Children: Neglected Stories from the Bible *by Megan McKenna (Orbis Books, 1994, 225 pages)*

Reviewed by April Yamasaki, Clearbrook, B.C.

In this thought-provoking work, Megan McKenna explores a selection of stories from both the Old and New Testament. These include the struggle between Sarah and Hagar, Jesus feeding the crowds, Jesus meeting the Canaanite woman and other stories.


Megan McKenna
Not Counting Women and Children
Neglected Stories from the Bible

In spite of the book's subtitle, however, these are not so much neglected stories but a different way of looking at stories already familiar to students of the Bible.

McKenna's approach to the biblical text is highly personalized. For her the stories do not end with the biblical record but continue in the lives of people today, particularly in the lives of those neglected by modern society: not just women and children but the poor, the sick, the elderly, prostitutes, strangers and others who tend to be forgotten. For this reason her interpretations of the biblical stories attempt to be both inclusive and communal, often drawing on contemporary experience and issues as well as on her own work as a workshop and retreat leader.

Some readers may take exception in places to McKenna's reading of Scripture. For example, when discussing Jesus feeding the crowds, she implies that Jesus' miracle was not the multiplication of bread and fish but the generosity of people sharing what they had with others. In discussing the Egyptian oppression of the Hebrew people she suggests the absence of men in the story means that the Hebrew men were indeed obeying the order of the Pharaoh and killing their own children. These and other assumptions go well beyond what is said in the biblical texts.

Still, for those who are willing to move outside their comfort zone and to sift what they read, McKenna's work is worth reading. It's fresh, thought-provoking and clearly focused on the life-changing nature of the biblical text.

Pacifists or activists?

Mennonite Peacemaking: From Quietism to Activism *by Leo Driedger and Donald B. Kraybill (Herald Press, 1994, 344 pages)*

Reviewed by Arthur P. Boers, Waterloo, Ont.

Leo Driedger and Donald B. Kraybill, Mennonite sociologists, look at the transformation of Mennonite attitudes toward peacemaking and social involvement in the 20th century. They consider the shift from passive nonresistance to activism and political participation.

The authors give a fine overview of the history and legacy of nonresistance. Then they consider how modernization and individualization have played a role in transforming Mennonite ideas of peacemaking during the last century. They look at various events (particularly the world wars), conscientious objection, urbanization of Mennonites, changing vocabulary and the shift from separatism to tolerance.

Along the way, they consider various influential authors, including Harold Bender (and the "Anabaptist Vision") and Guy Hershberger (who negotiated the rift between historic nonresistance and activist pacifism). They also discuss how geography affects trends, noting some differences between Mennonites in Canada and the United States. The 20th century overview is well done. However, I wondered when one author cited himself as a leader in some shifts and changes; that may be true, but it raises questions about whether he had the necessary objectivity for this project.

The book includes a fascinating sociological study of our changing approaches to peacemaking and participation in the state. There is a growing ambiguity of the boundaries between church and world. This is a result of theological developments, increased urbanization and the social involvements of Mennonites. There is growing discomfort with negative and passive implications of traditional "nonresistance." More and more

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leaders emphasize responsibility and greater political participation under the auspices of the Lordship of Christ.

The authors offer sobering evidence about how few Mennonites are committed to peacemaking. The conclusions are noteworthy: "The evidence seems clear. Modernization levies a rather heavy toll on historic nonresistance. Nonresistant beliefs wither along all the dimensions of modernization. … Urbanization, individualism and materialism have the strongest corrosive impact on passive nonresistance. There is good news, however, for peacemakers. Urbanization, socioeconomic diversity and education all boost Mennonite commitments to peacemaking, peace witness and activism. Upward mobility and the move to the city, rather than threatening peacemaking values, appear to fortify them." They also note that "fundamentalist beliefs corrode all the dimensions of peacemaking except nonresistance."

Where does this leave us? As Mennonites become "more educated and urban, pluralistic and increasingly open to political involvement," there are both opportunities and challenges. The authors wonder whether Mennonites believe that peacemaking is central to the gospel: Few congregations make it a membership prerequisite. Such are the issues and challenges we must continue to face.

SOFTWARE

Binary Bibles

MacBible 3.0 *and* **Biblesource**
(Zondervan)

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

With *MacBible* (Macintosh) and *Biblesource* (IBM), the Zondervan company, a pillar of the Christian book publishing world, has stepped into the computer age. Its initial attempt, while user friendly, will find most use professionally, in seminaries and in some pastors' studies.

The scope of the project is already large. You can buy for Macintosh or IBM the New International Version, NIV study notes, King James Version, New American Standard, Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties and the Greek New Testament. In addition, the New Revised Standard Version with Aprocrypha, the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint and the New American Bible are available for Macintosh. The NIV Bible Dictionary and the NIV Exhaustive Concordance are available for IBM.

Each text is available independently as a "module." These modules can be linked together to run simultaneous searches in several texts or to switch from text to text. And Zondervan has visions of expanding the project to add new reference works as future modules compatible with either program.

While the capabilities of the software are impressive, they may not necessarily be useful for the average student of the Bible. But if you find yourself turning to a concordance often, the programs could prove invaluable.

The search mechanisms are faster and more refined than searching through a book. And with a little practice, you can run quite specific searches. An example from the training manual: running a search for *(Abraham,Sarah),(Isaac;Rebekah).* will locate all Scriptures where the words *Abraham* and *Sarah* occur together without the words *Isaac* or *Rebecca* occurring in the same context. You can search for parts of words or strings of words in all or any limited section of the Bible.

The other key use for the programs, aside from searches, is the ability to incorporate sections of the Scriptures into another document. The program has a limited word processor built in, so that you can edit Scripture and add your own notes. These can easily be exported into other programs, which could save you typing if you are quoting the Bible a lot.

Some features seem harder to imagine a scholarly use for, such as the ability to print Scripture upside down and backward in white-on-black type. The programs are easy to install and learn, although performing more advanced searches may require some reading in the manual provided with each module.

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Resources

- **Commission on Overseas Mission Prayer Directory** provides information about mission workers and ministries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. For a free copy write COM, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, or call (316) 283-5100.
- **A Dry Roof and a Cow: Dreams and Portraits of Our Neighbors** (Mennonite Central Committee, 1994, $19.95 U.S./$25.95 Cdn.) is a book of photographs and quotes celebrating MCC's 75th anniversary.
- **Mennonite Central Committee Occasional Papers: "A Theological Basis for Intervention Ministries"** by C. Norman Kraus and **"Mennonite International Peacemaking During and After the Cold War** by J. Robert Charles are available from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151; $1 U.S./$1.25 Cdn. each.
- **A Matter of Interest** is a 13-minute animated video that draws a parallel between life in debt-stricken countries and the plight of individuals. Comes with study guide. For college groups, Sunday school classes and study groups. Available on loan from MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151 or MCC Ontario, 50 Kent Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1, (519) 745-8458.
- **An Orphan's Song** by H.M.R. Dueck (Windflower Communications, 1993, $13.99 U.S./$15.99 Cdn.), a fictionalized account based on the experiences of Henry and Katie Huebert, tells the story of the orphaned Henry, first in Russia and then in Canada.
- **Against the Wind** by John Friesen (Windflower Communications, 1994, $17.99 U.S./$24.99 Cdn.) is the story of four Mennonite villages (Gnadental, Gruenfeld, Neu-Chortitza and Steinfeld) in the Southern Ukraine, 1872-1943.
- **Bread of Life: Diaries and Memories of a Dakota Family**, by Marian Kleinsasser Towne, takes place in the Hutterite Mennonite community near Freeman, S.D., in the 1930s and '40s. Available prepaid from Marian K. Towne, 5129 N. Illinois St., Indianapolis, IN 46208-2613; $25 with postage.

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Editorial

Resisting the disease of affluence

The tide is changing. When the General Conference Mennonite Church began overseas mission work back in 1900 in India, people left their homes to bring the gospel to people overseas. That call is still being heard, and people continue to bring the Good News to people overseas.

Today, however, we hear over and over from mission workers that they are being changed, being drawn deeper into their commitment to Christ, by their encounter with believers overseas. Today it is the overseas churches that are growing, while ours at home tend to stagnate. It is the overseas churches that find the presence of Christ in the midst of suffering, while we experience absence and loneliness in the midst of affluence.

I hear stories of churches called Mennonite that wander from their roots and grow embarrassed by the name. Meanwhile, people in Brazil and elsewhere are discovering Mennonite beliefs and praising God. They rejoice because they finally find a church that affirms their longings for a gospel of wholeness, for Good News that is not just a ticket to heaven or entangled with rules about what to wear but is concerned about people's well-being, about social relationships, about justice.

What a sad irony that while many North American Mennonites want to shed the label, growing numbers of Latin American Christians want to embrace the Mennonite faith! Perhaps we need to rediscover our Anabaptist roots.

> **What a sad irony that while many North American Mennonites want to shed the label, growing numbers of Latin American Christians want to embrace the Mennonite faith!**

In his introduction to *Early Anabaptist Spirituality* (Paulist Press), which he edited, Daniel Liechty identifies three basic themes of Anabaptist spirituality: (1) "the immediacy of the human relationship with God" (people didn't need a clerical mediator to go to God), (2) "a life of discipleship" (they asked, How should a Christian live?) and (3) "the corporate nature of the Christian life" (only in community could one be a Christian). Compare these themes with the experience of Mennonites in Brazil (and elsewhere).

Buy, buy, buy: Our community hosted a mission festival Oct. 1-2 (see page 15). Scott and Mary Brubaker-Zehr, who returned in June from working in Colombia, spoke at my congregation that Sunday morning. Since they returned to North America, Scott said, they have felt pressure to buy, buy, buy. The desire to have more things is like a disease, he said. He has found it hard to resist. What has helped him, he said, is to remember people he knew in Colombia.

He told us about people who were poor, barely making it, yet they gave Scott and Mary hospitality. He told us about the many ministries Colombian Mennonites are involved in, despite their small size. Representatives from that church have written to North American Mennonites, expressing their concern that involvement in ministries beyond our own congregations "seems to be declining" (see our Aug. 9 issue, page 12). Scott asked us to listen to our brothers and sisters there and elsewhere as they beseech us not to fall prey to the influences of our affluent society.

Ched Myers, in his new book *Who Will Roll Away the Stone?* (Orbis), looks at the story of the rich young man who comes to Jesus (Mark 10:17-22). Myers compares Jesus' response to what 12-step programs call intervention. The man was addicted to his possessions. So, too, says Myers, are we in North America. Our disease of affluence calls for a radical approach, he says. We need to repent and make reparation. Perhaps listening to our brothers and sisters overseas, as well as visiting them and living with them, will help us do just that.

We began sending missionaries to lands of great need. We now send mission workers *from* lands of great need, the need for repentance and renewal. While we have introduced people in Brazil and elsewhere to Anabaptist beliefs, perhaps they can show us something about living out those beliefs. *Gordon Houser*

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Gospel economics / p. 10

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Taking time to play and love / p. 12

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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Abiding *in the love of God*

- The secret of productivity (see page 3)
- Begin a journey of joy (see page 6)
- A daily walk (see page 8)

Prologue

The early Anabaptists wrestled with the meaning of grace and discipleship. On the one hand, they tried to avoid Roman Catholicism's system of rules that made one suitable for heaven. On the other hand, they spoke out against Reformation leaders who promoted faith without works. Jesus' words in John 15 about abiding provide a helpful guide. Read the excerpt (pages 3-5) from the new book *Praying with the Anabaptists* (Faith & Life Press) for some insights into this dilemma.

A man writes a poignant letter to his 12-year-old daughter about beginning a journey of prayer (page 6), and Glen Blesi (page 8) tells how he learned to appreciate praying while walking. An excellent idea—one I've tried myself.

Our Speaking Out column (page 10), in which readers get to express their opinions, calls for a different way of handling the salaries of church workers.

One of our pastors looks at the Lord's Prayer (page 11), and we profile a church member who has learned from experience the need to maintain a balance in his life in the areas of work, play and spirituality (page 12).

For anyone wanting to do more reading about prayer, check out the list of books on page 8, or you may talk with someone at a nearby Christian bookstore for more titles. *gh*

Next issue: The gambling mania

Cover: Photo by Dale D. Gehman

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The secret of productivity

Jesus promises his disciples they will bear fruit—if they abide in him.

Marlene Kropf and Eddy Hall

Our society loves results. It showers applause, awards and wealth on athletes who hit the most home runs or make the most touchdowns. It admires the executive who takes over a failing business and turns it into a thriving enterprise. It celebrates the successful completion of a spectacular space flight.

Even modern-day Anabaptists, who assign less significance to Heisman trophies, Dun and Bradstreet ratings and space walks than some others do, tend to be no less result-oriented. While some Christians may be content to enjoy their faith privately, we want to make a difference. We want to help usher in the reign of Christ. We're out to change the world.

For those of us who long to build a better world, who want to make life better for those we touch, Jesus told the parable of the vine and branches. This parable, perhaps more directly than any other part of Jesus' teaching, is about spiritual productivity. It tells us how to bear fruit.

This parable reveals an astonishing secret, a key to productivity that the world will never suspect. The greatest clue to this secret is not in what the parable says but in what it does not say. Although the whole parable is about how to bear fruit, never does Jesus command his disciples to bear fruit. The parable is full of commands, but none is a command to bear fruit. They are commands to abide.

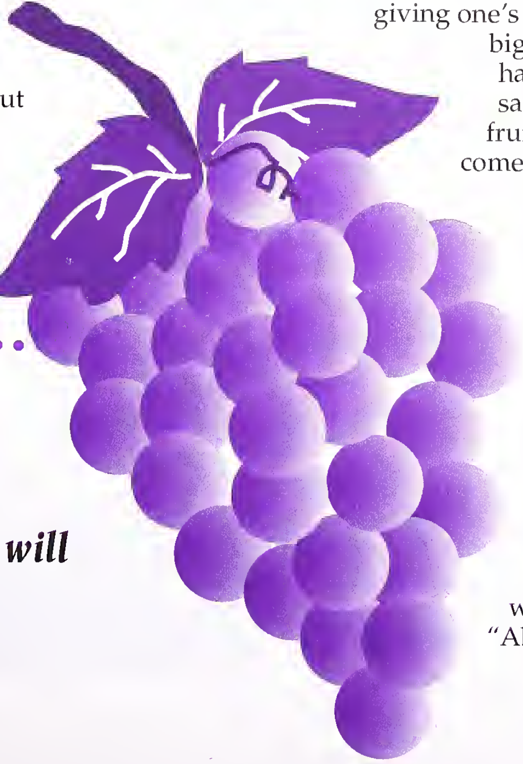
So the secret is this: Fruit-bearing is not a command, it is a promise. If you want to bear fruit, Jesus is saying, don't focus on bearing fruit; focus on abiding. Fruit will follow.

It makes sense enough for a branch, but could it really be true when it comes to ministry? To touching people's lives? To changing the world? Could Jesus really mean that such results cannot be achieved by seeking results?

Spiritual fruitfulness: We've heard that the pursuit of happiness is a futile pursuit. Happiness is not to be had by pursuing it; it is the by-product of giving one's life to something bigger than personal happiness. In much the same way, spiritual fruitfulness does not come from straining to bear fruit; it comes from abiding.

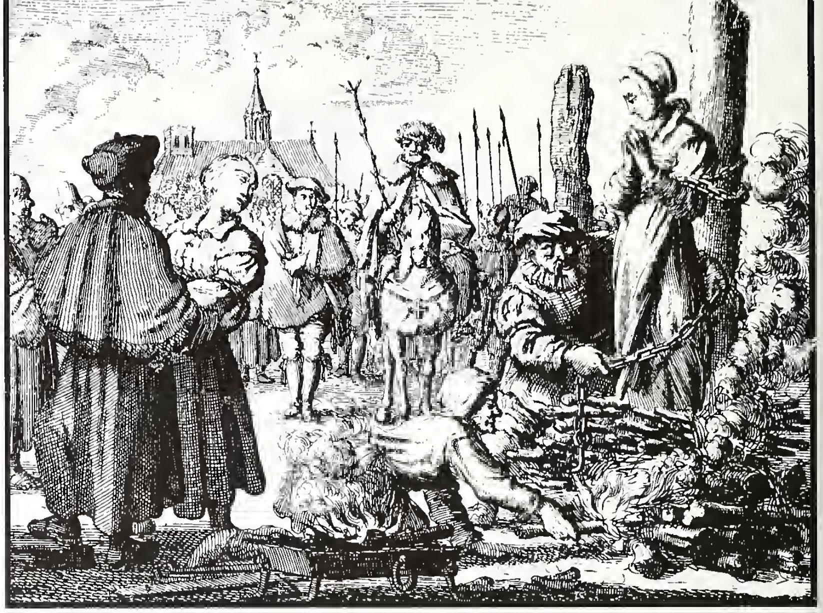
But what does that mean? It's clear enough what it means for a branch to abide in a vine, but what does it mean, in real life, for you and me to abide in Christ? How do we go about it?

Our first clue is found in John 15:9, where Jesus says, "Abide in my love." The



Jesus is inviting us to live so aware of his enfolding love that even when we cannot see where obedience will lead, we trust and therefore follow.

Trust and obedience feed each other. Trust emboldens us to obey even in the face of risk.



phrase calls up images that go beyond simply knowing we are loved, or even feeling loved. It suggests being surrounded by love, living within love's protection. It may remind us of places where we have felt unconditionally loved and therefore totally safe. To live so surrounded by love is to live in trust because there is nothing to fear.

Jesus is inviting us to live so aware of his enfolding love that even when we cannot see where obedience will lead, we trust and therefore follow. This love-inspired trust is the first dimension of abiding in Christ.

The second clue is found in John 15:10: "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love." Trust and obedience feed each other. Trust emboldens us to obey even in the face of risk. Then when we obey, we more fully experience God's trustworthiness. Greater trust leads to more radical obedience, which leads to still greater trust.

And what is this obedience to commandments Jesus speaks of? Does it mean following the teachings of Jesus found in the Gospels? Yes, but it means much more. Remember, Jesus was speaking these words not to an anonymous crowd but to 11 intimate friends. His commands to them had included not only public teaching but also one-on-one instruction and guidance.

To apply Jesus' teaching to our lives merely as ethical law is to obey as a servant, but Jesus told the disciples that he no longer regarded them as servants but as friends (verse 15). The obedience of the friend is fuller and more joyful, because the friend is motivated not by outward authority but by inner love and the Spirit's guidance.

"There are two kinds of obedience," Michael Sattler wrote. "The servile looks to the outward and prescribed command of his Lord; the filial is attentive to the inner witness and the Spirit. … The filial is not contrary to the servile, as it might appear, but better and higher. Therefore, let [the one] who is in the servile, seek after a better [obedience] which is the filial, which needs the servile not at all."

Trust and obey. That is how we abide in Christ. And Jesus promises that if we abide, we will bear fruit.

Marlene Kropf and Eddy Hall are authors of Praying with the Anabaptists *(Faith & Life Press, 1994), from which the articles on pages 3-5 are reprinted with permission.*

Prayer of abiding

A *guided exercise*

Even in our life of prayer we may get caught trying to be a "success." If we pray often enough and hard enough and in the right ways, surely our lives will produce the fruit of righteousness.

Instead of trying harder, Jesus told his disciples to "abide," to "be" with him. But in a production-minded culture we can hardly imagine what it means to "be" with Christ. Centering prayer is one way Christians through the centuries have practiced "being" with Christ.

If you want to practice centering prayer as a way of abiding in Christ, follow these steps:

1. Listen to the hymn "Prince of peace, control my will" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book*, #534).
2. Spend a few moments becoming quiet. Light a candle as a symbol of Christ, the Light. Ask God to fill you with a sense of Christ's presence.
3. Remain quietly aware of Christ, not doing anything or trying to form words to speak. Just "be" in the presence of Christ. If you find your mind wandering or your body becoming fidgety, focus your attention again on the candle, the symbol of Christ's presence.
4. When you find yourself quietly at peace, open your heart to the Spirit's voice. Is there anything God wants to say to you? If you don't sense God is speaking to you, continue resting in God's presence. If you hear the voice of God, respond with an open heart.
5. Give God thanks for being with you. Ask for the gift of a deeper sense of Christ's presence in your life.
6. Sing or listen to the hymn "Prince of peace, control my will."

Anabaptist voices: *the partnership of faith and works*

Michael Sattler and Balthasar Hubmaier speak to a theological dilemma.

The leaders of the 16th-century Anabaptists were honest people who cared about integrity. They were concerned that those who called themselves Christians would in fact bear Christ-like fruit. They knew for certain that, on their own, human beings could not produce the fruit that was a mark of being a disciple. But they were also concerned about churches that did not call people to righteous living. How could they resolve this dilemma?

'Middle way': Michael Sattler, who was the chief architect of the Schleitheim Confession in 1527, wrote about a "middle way" that did not fall into the trap of works or the trap of faith without works:

"Blessed be [the one] who remains on the middle path, who turns aside neither to the work-righteous (who promised blessedness or the forgiveness of sins through works done without faith), preaching works in such a way that they think no more of faith, so that all their works are like wild plums, ceremonies without faith. Nor to the side of the scribes, who although they have forsaken works, then turn aside to the right and teach in the name of 'gospel' a faith without works and take the poor obedient Christ (who had no place to lay his head, who speaks without complaint or self-defense) as their satisfaction, but will not hear what he says, 'Come, follow me'" (Haas, p. 69).

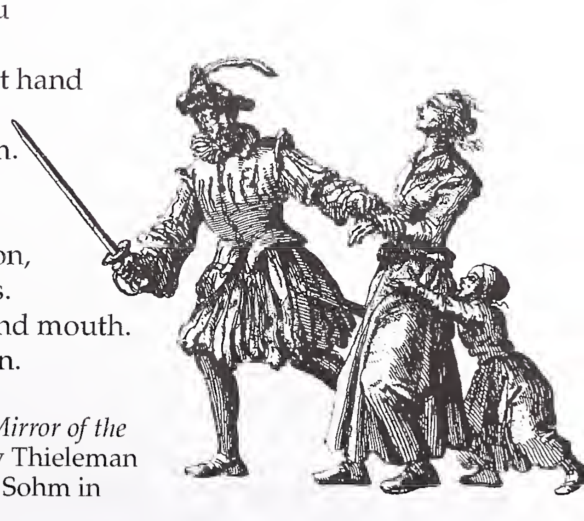
True fruit: In a carefully written theological treatise, Balthasar Hubmaier described the human and divine partnership that produces the true fruit of discipleship.

"Since however a [person] knows and confesses that by nature he is a bad and poisonous tree and that in himself he cannot produce any good fruit, this commitment, consent and open witness [of baptism] does not take place in human power or ability … but in the name of God … that is, in the grace and power of God. Therefore [the person] has also become willing from now on openly to confess faith in the name of Jesus Christ before everyone and has committed himself and decided to live from now on according to the word and commandment of Christ, not from human ability … but in the power of God. Now [the person] breaks out in word and deed, announces and magnifies the name and praise of Christ in order that others through us may become holy and blessed … that the kingdom of Christ may be increased" (Klaassen, p. 166).

Sources: *Readings from Mennonite Writings New and Old* by J. Craig Haas (Good Books, 1992) and *Anabaptism in Outline*, edited by Walter Klaassen (Herald Press, 1981)

Prayer *of Vilgard and Casper of Schoeneck*

O God,
  you are rich in grace.
Keep us, your children,
  that we may hold to you
    so those who have come to you
      will not be confounded.
Lead us diligently with your right hand
  into the promised land,
    your eternal heavenly kingdom.
Honor be unto you, O God,
  in your high throne.
You have given us Christ, your Son,
  and imparted divine grace to us.
We now confess you with heart and mouth.
Praised be your holy name. Amen.



(From *The Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror of the Defenseless Christians*, 12th edition, by Thieleman J. van Braght, translated by Joseph F. Sohm in 1886, Herald Press, 1979, p. 429)

Begin a journey of joy

A father's letter to his 12-year-old daughter

Anonymous

Dear Deborah,

This journal and the book that comes with it form an invitation to start a journey I hope you will continue as long as you live. I don't know if you are ready for this journey now. I wasn't when I was your age. In fact, I didn't begin this journey in this form until a couple of years ago. The journey I am talking about is seeking to know yourself and God more fully through regular reading, reflection, prayer and writing.

I will understand if you decide now is not the time for you to begin this journey, but I want to offer you the invitation. You are a thoughtful, mature and sensitive person, wrestling with important issues.

I also invite you to start because I can already see that it holds great promise. I feel this journey pulling me toward being more fully the kind of person I most want to be—one who cares for others, one who lives life in awareness of others and of God.

You and others in our family know how far I am from being that kind of person. I often respond in irritation, anger, frustration or fatigue. Often I am preoccupied with my own priorities. I ask your forgiveness again for the ways I fail to love you. But I sense in myself a movement toward loving you better. And whatever movement there has been is due to regularly taking time for this journey. I have found that when I start my day reading the Bible and some meditations, praying and writing about my feelings, my hopes, the things I care about, I often see you and others around me in a different way. I see you as the treasure you are, not as an irritant or distraction.

I have also discovered that the journey is nurturing something in me. I find I want to return to this journey because I sense that it leads "home." It leads me to that place where I should be, where I most want to be, where I am most authentic. It calls me to see what is most important, not just what happens to be going on. It makes me desire a closer sense of God's presence, and it raises questions about my priorities and how I spend my life's energies.

There is nothing more valuable than this invitation and the love that makes me offer it to you. I hope this journey will become a part of your life.

How should you begin, if you choose to? I am only a beginner, but here are some suggestions:

1. Set aside a special time and place to do this daily, maybe for 15 minutes, at about the same point in the day. You will miss some days of course, but it is important that it become part of your normal routine, like taking a shower, rather than something not done regularly, like cleaning your room. I also suggest that you do it at a special place. It could be in your room, but maybe in a spot different from where you do most other things —perhaps sitting on a pillow on the floor.

2. Begin by reading, thoughtfully, the whole selection for the day.

3. Think, meditate and pray about it, especially the suggestion at the end. Let your mind wander to connect ideas or feelings from the meditation with your own. Open yourself to let God lead your thoughts and prayers, and listen to the questions, ideas and feelings that come.

4. Bring into your mind other things close to you—things that make you happy, that you're grateful for, that you feel bad or uneasy about, that make you angry or sad. Remember others—friends, those who suffer, those who need special care. Also call to mind things we often take for granted—health, a keen mind, food or friends. Nothing is too ordinary, too bad or too unrealistically hopeful to bring.

5. Do all of this in the consciousness of God's presence. Seek God, sense God seeking you. Reflect on your thoughts and feelings, as it were, with God. Accept God's love, enjoy it. Be honest. Know that God cares for and accepts you as you are. You need no masks with God, and you don't have to be "good" to be loved by God (as I'm sure I sometimes make you feel you must be "good" to be loved by me, even though I love you "no matter what").

Skjold Photographs (for illustration only)

> ***The journey leads me to that place where I should be, where I most want to be, where I am most authentic. It calls me to see what is most important, not just what happens to be going on.***

6. After a time of thought and prayer write in your journal.

a. Write honestly. This is a place to express what you love, where you hurt, what you question. It is a place to learn to know yourself.

b. Write in the awareness of God's presence. There will be times when you doubt God's existence or God's goodness. But this is no problem for God. God is big enough not to be shocked or alienated by our honesty. I often write prayers addressing God about my thoughts, hopes and fears. Write down what you will do in response to the suggestion at the end of the day's reading. And write down any new insights you receive or any new commitments you want to make.

c. Write for yourself. You may choose to share something from your journal with someone, but don't write for that purpose.

7. Return to the prayer for the day in the book. Pray it again and close your devotional time.

8. If you are drawn to the journey but not to the book I've given you [*Just Between God and Me* by Sandra Drescher-Lehman (Zondervan, 1991)], **feel free to look for something else**. There are many resources. Different ones meet us at different times. There is nothing sacred about this one.

9. You may find it helpful to talk to someone about this journey. If you'd like a spiritual friend with whom to talk about your journey, I'd be glad to help you find someone. I meet once a month with someone to talk about my journey.

I love you, Deborah. You have so much to give to others, so much potential for finding joy and satisfaction in life. I remember the words in 1 Thessalonians 3:9: "How can I thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that I feel before our God because of you?" I know you can bring much joy to others because you have brought it to me. I know you can find joy, too. I want joy for you. I believe finding it lies in the direction of the journey I've invited you to begin. Whether you take the journey or not, I love you. And God loves you.

With gratitude for who you are to me,

Dad.

I will not deny my Savior

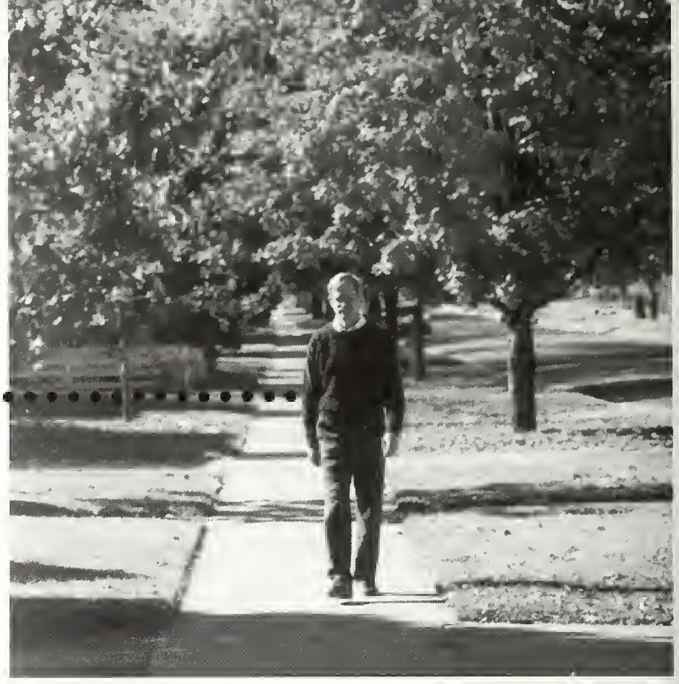
Adam Jimale Farah

The Everlasting Father will never fail from his promise.
And I will not deny my Savior.
If I stay on the high mountains
  and ice fall over me,
I will not deny my Savior.
If I stay in the desert for one hundred years,
If I cannot have a farm
  or flocks or even a wife,
I will not deny my Savior.
If they beat me with a stick,
  slay me, and throw me into the sea,
I will not deny my Savior.
For I had a sin disease in my heart,
  and he is the One who healed me,
So I will not deny my Savior.

Adam Jimale Farah, a leader in the Somali (Mennonite) Fellowship, died Sept. 24

A daily walk

Without a car to drive to work, the author gains new insights into prayer while walking.


Gordon Houser (for illustration only)

Glen Blesi

I wrecked my family's second vehicle while I was between jobs. Three months later the work I found was just under four miles from home. Since my wife worked an opposite shift some 17 miles from home, and since we weren't ready to replace the second vehicle, it seemed that walking to work when I needed to was the thing to do.

At first I didn't treasure the idea of walking to or from work, but soon I found priceless benefits from it. Something about being outside and alone helps me concentrate on God, the creation and God's Son. It is the perfect time to pray aloud, not always possible at home. Many times while walking I alternate between reading the Bible and talking to the Lord. But while I delight in having the opportunity to speak audibly to the Lord, I don't have to make a sound.

A man named Sadhu Sundar Singh, living from 1889 to 1933, was a well-known saint in India. He spoke of such quiet prayer:

"I have no special posture for prayer. I may sit or kneel or stand. I use no words. I think only of those things that I have been reading [in the Bible], of the things that I have been doing or intend to do, of the people I know, of myself and of Jesus—such thought is prayer. And in such prayer, God speaks."

Outside, with a minimum of distractions—I have only to watch for traffic —I am free to allow God to speak to me. And while walking physically I am being refined in my spiritual walk. I am learning to be patient with others as God is patient with me. I am learning to wait on God for good things. I am learning to avoid looking at the negative things in people while seeing their potential for righteous living.

Glen Blesi lives in Nixa, Mo.

It is the perfect time to pray aloud, not always possible at home.

Some books (among hundreds) on prayer

Disciplines for the Inner Life, edited by Bob Benson Sr. and Michael W. Benson (Generoux/Nelson, 1989)

Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home by Richard Foster (HarperCollins, 1992)

Clinging: The Experience of Prayer by Emilie Griffin (McCracken Press, 1994)

Where God Begins to Be by Karen Karper (Eerdmans, 1994)

When the Heart Waits by Sue Monk Kidd (HarperCollins, 1990)

Dakota: A Spiritual Geography by Kathleen Norris (Ticknor & Fields, 1993)

The Way of the Heart by Henri J.M. Nouwen (HarperCollins, 1981)

Free to Pray, Free to Love by Max Oliva (Ave Maria Press, 1994)

Radical Grace by Richard Rohr (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1993)

Prayers for Everyday by Elaine Sommers Rich (Faith & Life Press, 1990)

The Book of Daily Prayer by Robert Webber (Eerdmans, 1993)

Letters

FREE POPSICLES

I like your little boxed item in *The Mennonite* called "Ideas Your Church Can Try." Please keep that coming to us.

At a recent "University Church Fair" at the University of Lethbridge, a coalition of congregations shared a booth and handed out free popsicles to all passersby. Greeting students with a smile and "Have a good day!" was a delightful serendipity moment in the day. Literature about the sponsoring churches and some key issues was available.

Our congregation was not a co-sponsor, but since my table was next to theirs, I often joined them in inviting students to enjoy a free popsicle. *Fred Unruh, Lethbridge, Alta.*

A FRIEND OF THE EARTH

David E. Ortman is to be commended for his article "The Earth Needs Friends in the Church" (Oct. 11 issue, page 3). He is a resource person in environmental programs.

In 1876 Rev. Peter Dyck of Tiege, Poland, immigrated to Butler County, Kan., bringing with him clover seed to help farmers develop crop rotation with legumes. It was a Flemish tradition dating back to the 16th century.

He also taught his family not to overgraze native prairie pastures. His descendants' fields now have nutritious grass, many wildflowers and many species of birds in the wildlife habitats. Rev. Dyck was a friend of the earth and had a deep reverence for God's creation. *Arnold Regier, Newton, Kan.*

PART OF THE SOLUTION

The Oct. 11 issue of *The Mennonite* focused on our faith and the environment. So what do we do about it?

At times we all find ourselves worrying or complaining about something while not knowing what to do about it. Maybe we choose to remain inactive because it is not enough of a priority. Many people within the Anabaptist family of faith have concerns about our responsibility to care for creation, yet—besides household recycling—the problem seems too big to engage. For all those who want to be part of the solution instead of the problem, I have an invitation for you.

On the weekend of Feb. 24-26, 1995, the Mennonite Environmental Task Force is sponsoring a major conference on the environment. This is not just any conference. Titled, "Creation Summit: Shaping an Anabaptist Theology for Living," it is from beginning to end designed to engage each participant in serious reflection and action planning. As a participant in this conference you will be a member of a caucus group of people with similar interests and vocational experience. While reflecting on ideas from theologians, Bible scholars and farmers, you will have opportunity to wrestle with the issues within your caucus group.

This weekend is all about placing theology within life. As practitioners and theologians we will talk and envision the future together. This is a summit for people all across North America with guests from other countries. Whether you are a farmer, environmentalist, teacher, government employee, businessperson or minister, if you simply care enough to engage in the discernment process, I hope to meet you at Creation Summit.

The Creation Summit will be held at Wonderland Camp and Conference Center, Camp Lake, Wis. For a brochure with more information and registration materials, write to Lenore Waltner, c/o Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515-1245. You may call Lenore at (219) 294-7523. For questions not answered by the brochure, call me at (612) 721-6697. *Tim Lehman, member of the Mennonite Environmental Task Force and chair of the Creation Summit program committee, Minneapolis*

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

Mexico—The Lord is being glorified in Coyoacan, in the church "Nueva Vida" ("New Life," 2 Corinthians 5:17); it is growing. At the end of the month of July we plan to baptize at least 10 new believers. We are working with 17 in discipleship and are involving the whole church in personal evangelism. We meet in our house every Wednesday from 7 to 9 p.m. to study the Bible, pray and witness for the Lord. On Sundays from 10 a.m to noon we have our regular service. All of the activities are being backed by the Holy Spirit. We see blessings.

Equally as God is being glorified, the devil is bombarding us: The neighbors are complaining because they do not want us to have services in our apartment. The [pollution] is affecting us very much, especially our oldest son, Lougeri, and the doctor has diagnosed his problem as severe environmental allergies, affecting all of the respiratory canals and his lungs. We need much prayer. The doctor recommends that if conditions do not improve, Lougeri be taken out of the country in two months. *Carmen and Vincent Minino*

Update: Lougeri's health is improving.

Kobe, Japan—I need to build more ties to the community. Two things I want to get involved in are a cultural program and a Christian social service organization. The first goal is more specifically to understand the culture and as a way of getting to know people in a "neutral" environment as a fellow learner. It may lead to opportunities to be a witness in the community.

Getting involved in some kind of social action is a way of connecting the Kobe church to this dimension of the Good News. Etsuko, my wife, has begun volunteering at the Kobe Adventist Hospital Hospice and has attended a seminar about becoming a volunteer for a pregnancy distress telephone counseling service. These deal with significant issues in this society. Typically, terminally ill patients are not informed of the nature of their illness, so a hospice program is a challenge to this culture's way of dealing with death and dying. Also, in a society in which abortion is freely available and is the expected answer to an unwanted pregnancy, providing advice on alternatives (e.g., adoption) and encouragement when the alternative choice is criticized is an important service. *Russell Sawatsky*

Speaking out

Gospel economics

Let's equalize salaries of our leaders.

Dan Graber

As we strive to be followers of Jesus' teachings, as set forth in the Sermon on the Mount, many of us stumble over gospel economics: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume … for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:19a, 21).

Gospel economics has found various expressions among those of Anabaptist heritage. The Hutterites and the Amish have literally spelled out gospel economics, even to the point of having universal health coverage.

Among other Anabaptists, arriving at consensus on gospel economics seems more difficult. A strong, new direction in the area of economics could strengthen our Anabaptist witness and enlarge our missionary vision.

Perhaps David J. McGown's letter in *Sojourners* magazine can help us. He writes, "All ministers, including regional and national executives, receive the same salary and pension benefits." He is referring to the Methodist and the United Reformed churches of the United Kingdom.

McGown goes on to say that pastors of wealthy churches receive the same salary as those who serve inner-city or small, rural churches. He emphasizes how this changes the "pecking order" at conference meetings. "Calls" are to needs, not to higher salaries.

In our close-knit group of Anabaptist believers we may be able to adopt such a practice in our churches, colleges and all church-related institutions. This lifts the burden of economics-related decisions from committees and allows more time for discerning the leading of the Holy Spirit in terms of mission.

Examples of gospel economics can be found among our constituency. Members of Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa., agreed that, along with sending two delegates to the 1997 Mennonite World Conference in India, they will also give $8,000 to finance delegates from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

A vision of gospel economics starts with leadership in our churches and institutions. It is there the future mission of the church will be defined in action as well as faith.

"What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works?" (James 2:14a). Gospel economics will do more to change the positive direction of the Anabaptist vision than anything we preach.

Dan Graber lives in Dade City, Fla.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

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Shaped by the Lord's Prayer

Five ways we are changed by praying the Lord's Prayer with other believers.

Fred Unruh

Our communities repeatedly pray the Lord's Prayer. But what kind of community do we create when we pray it? Jesus' model prayer (Matthew 6: 9-13) changes us each time we repeat its words. Its declarations shape us in many ways. I offer five:

1. We bind ourselves in community to all people who pray the "Our Father" with us.

We cannot say God is only for "me" or "us" or our kind when we pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth."

Each person who prays with us is our brother or sister, whether Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox or Coptic Christian. We have only *one* Father. We all have the *same* Father.

2. In praying "Our Father" **we declare and define what characterizes an earthly father (or mother).** Human fathers are to shape their lives according to our heavenly Father, not the other way around. God is not shaped by us, but we are to be shaped by the character of God. It matters a great deal how we understand God.

A truly loving parent provides for daily necessities, forgives and teaches forgiveness, directs life seeking to fulfill a divine purpose and faces life's tests with courage.

3. All who pray "Our Father" acknowledge that **we need God to help us face life's difficult times.** Our human insights, our abilities, our courage, are limited. When we pray, we confess our absolute reliance on God's care.

When we pray the Lord's Prayer we begin to prepare for times of testing, for temptations that we cannot avoid. We do not blame God for our temptations; we invite God to support us, encourage us, enable us to face our testing with courage.

When we hear our brothers and sisters praying, as we ourselves pray for strength to face times of testing, we remember our baptismal promises to help each other, as Christ helps us.

The Lord's Prayer binds us into a community of mutual support and encouragement as God's people.

4. When we pray the "Our Father," together with all the believers who pray this prayer with us, **we declare our allegiance to the kingdom of God's rule.**

Praying the prayer Jesus taught is a revolutionary act. This is not merely ritual; this is a declaration for all the world to witness, about whom we serve, about what rules we follow in our lives, about what loyalties we have placed at the center of our being. Praying the Lord's Prayer is one of the most dangerous and the most comforting things we can do.

"May your kingdom come, and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" is an oath of allegiance, that no earthly king, no military general, no legal entity, can override. Be sure you mean these words when you pray, "Our Father."

The Lord's Prayer binds us into a community of mutual support and encouragement as God's people.

5. The Lord's Prayer binds us into a community of celebration. We should sing this prayer often, for music helps us rejoice that we serve a God who deserves to be honored, who truly has the power and the authority to accomplish the truth, whose will brings about peace and justice.

Praying the prayer our Lord taught us creates a community of praise in which we as God's creatures celebrate God's goodness, God's incorruptible justice, God's restoring love and God's healing grace.

Wherever the "Our Father" is spoken or sung, we are in a community of celebration of the character of God.

We all have the same Father. Each person who prays with us is our brother or sister.

In praying "Our Father" we declare that God's character shapes our character, and we define what an earthly father (or mother) should strive to be.

All who pray "Our Father" acknowledge that we need God to help us face life's difficult times and that we need each other.

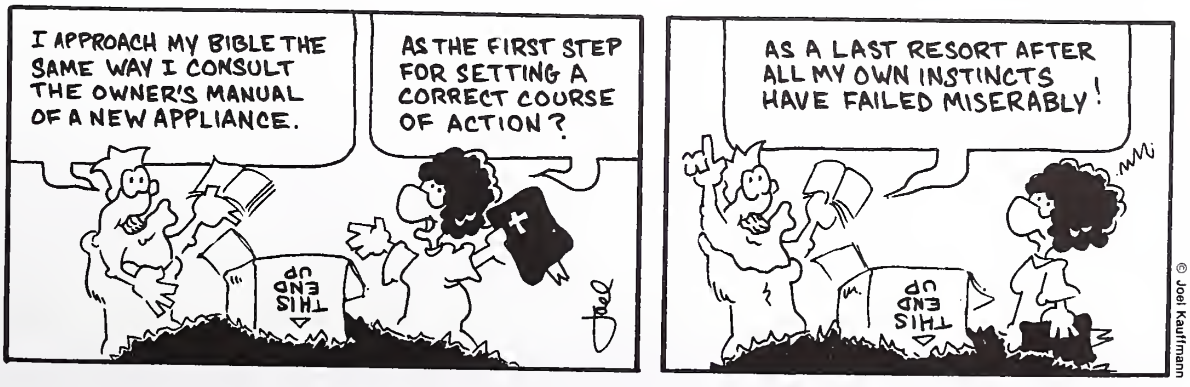
Together with all the believers who pray the Lord's Prayer with us, we declare our first allegiance to the kingdom of God's rule.

The Lord's Prayer binds us into a community of celebration where God's goodness, God's justice, God's love and healing grace are joyfully remembered.

May this community take shape among us all.

Fred Unruh is pastor at Lethbridge (Alta.) Mennonite Church.

Pontius' Puddle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THIS END UP
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THIS END UP
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Profile

Taking time to play and love

Frank Andres looks for balance in his spiritual life.

Carla Reimer

Frank Andres was a high school student at the United Mennonite Educational Institute in Leamington, Ont., when he began to have serious doubts about the Christian faith.

His low grades in his religion classes showed his lack of interest, he says. And though many of his friends signed up for the church catechism class, Frank didn't feel compelled to join them.

"I was young. I thought I was indestructible and infallible," says the 45-year-old, who owns and manages a tent and awning business in St. Catharines, Ont. "I couldn't come up with a reason to believe in God. I had no need for religion."

But in his mid-30s, Frank discovered he was wrong. A financial crisis on the farm that he operated together with his wife, Susann, proved to be a turning point.

"Susann and I were fairly new to the farming business. We borrowed money when the interest rates were high," he says. "We had several bouts of bad weather. By 1980 we started having financial problems.

"I took it as a sign from God—that I was not going to do it alone. I found my faith again."

Baptism: Frank can still remember the day he was baptized at Faith Mennonite Church in Leamington in June 1983. "It was a very emotional experience for me. I felt like a heavy burden had been lifted off [my shoulders]," he says.

After the baptism, he cried as people greeted him in a reception line. "I genuinely knew people were happy for me," says Frank. "I felt a great love and compassion emanating from them."

His wife, who had been strong in her Christian beliefs throughout their marriage, was particularly happy. "My lack of faith never was a source of conflict in our marriage. But I believe her faith kept our marriage together," he says.

Frank says he grew up in "your average Mennonite family." His dad was a lay pastor and worked in the canning business.

While his father, who died seven years ago, never talked to him about his faith, he was proud when his son made a commitment to Christ. Frank recalls how his dad, at a family reunion, said his baptism was one of the highlights of the year.

Today, in addition to his participation at the Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, Frank reads devotions before he heads to work in the morning. "I am always encouraged by what I read and how I can fit it into my everyday life," he says, noting that he takes a "subtle and quiet" approach to sharing his faith with others.

Carla Reimer

Frank Andres

Although Frank has a "strong desire" to keep working at his faith, he sometimes struggles with feeling inadequate when it comes to his knowledge of the Bible. "I am a little intimidated by Bible studies. Even my daughter has surpassed me," he says.

A fast-moving train: For a number of years, Frank knew that his hectic pace of life made him a prime candidate for burnout. He logged, on the average, 80 hours a week at his business and served as assistant treasurer and then the education chair at the Vineland church. "It was like I was on a fast-moving train and I couldn't get off, even if my life depended on it," he says.

Last year, when his wife became sick during the peak production time at the business, Frank hit bottom. "Last year was the worst year of my life. I found I could barely pull myself out of bed in the morning. I would get into work and sit at my desk and just gaze into the room," he says. "I was mentally and physically exhausted. God was telling me to slow down."

Like before, he listened. "I am learning how to delegate and I am learning how to say no," says Frank, who now works 40 to 50 hours a week and is no longer the education chair of the church.

"I am striving for a balance in the areas of work, play and spirituality," says Frank. "I agree with what a pastor said recently: 'When you get to heaven, God isn't going to ask, How many hours did you put in at work or how much money did you make? Instead God is going to ask, Did your time on earth make a difference in someone's life? Did you take time to play and love?'"

"When you get to heaven, God isn't going to ask, How many hours did you put in at work or how much money did you make? Instead God is going to ask, Did your time on earth make a difference in someone's life?"

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

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Why Have
Mennonite Men?
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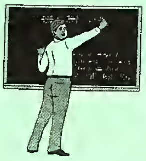

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THE
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Mennonite Men

NOVEMBER 8, 1994

A TRANSFORMED MEETINGHOUSE

Serving Hispanic Immigrants

A dance hall is slowly being transformed into the meetinghouse of the Comunidad de Amor (Community of Love) Mennonite Church. Serving Spanish-speaking immigrants near the heart of Philadelphia, Luis Naranjo and his leadership team preach, teach, visit and counsel people hungry for a genuine faith. They also have been the heartbeat of those laboring in this transformation. Eastern District Mennonite leaders have assisted them with counsel, funding and securing volunteer labor. A vanload of Kansans came in September to assist remodeling under the Abraham and Sarah program of the Commission on Home Ministries. Additional funding has come from the Church Extension Services loan program and a Tenth Man church building grant from Mennonite Men. More Tenth Man contributions are needed to complete this grant.

What have been the developments in congregational life? More and more people are attending Community of Love in its present rented facilities at the edge of the Hispanic community. Others have made life-changing decisions to follow Christ and await baptism. Some have recommitted themselves to the Christian life. Community of Love leaders are anxious to complete the remodeling in order that believers and seekers near the new facility may be served.

Luis Naranjo and his leadership team preach, teach, visit and counsel.

Completed so far are two upstairs apartments to be rented for income. A third awaits more radical renovation. One member constructed a pulpit. Current volunteers are installing downstairs walls, sanding old walls and painting. Worship services were scheduled to begin at the new site November 1.

Winifred Ewy

Presenting a Tenth Man check to Community of Love Mennonite Church (left to right): Luis Eduardo Orozco, Luis Naranjo, Lester Ewy, Ana Naranjo

Why Have Mennonite Men?

The thriving Bethel Mennonite Church, serving the Fortuna-Versailles, Mo., rural community, averages 191 at its weekly worship. A variety of businesses, such as custom millworking and manufacturing portable generators, dot the countryside and are operated by conservative and progressive Mennonites.

No less thriving is Bethel's Mennonite Men group. Twenty to 30 men meet monthly for a variety of outside speakers, reporting on special events, sharing of joys and hurts followed by prayer. Sometimes they serve with Mennonite Disaster Service. They sponsor all-church dinners: one during Valentine season, another to honor graduates.

Why have a Mennonite Men's group? Why even have Women in Mission? A board of trustees? Perhaps all members should take turns cleaning the church building and making repairs.

Specialized subgroups have been part of church life from the beginning. The first Christian men's group operated a food service for destitute widows. Dorcas of Joppa has inspired Christian sewing societies to this day. As the Spirit of God has distributed a variety of gifts to members—teaching, helping, hospitality and more—so those with like gifts have joined each other for more efficient service. As they work or teach, their camaraderie makes the task more joyful.

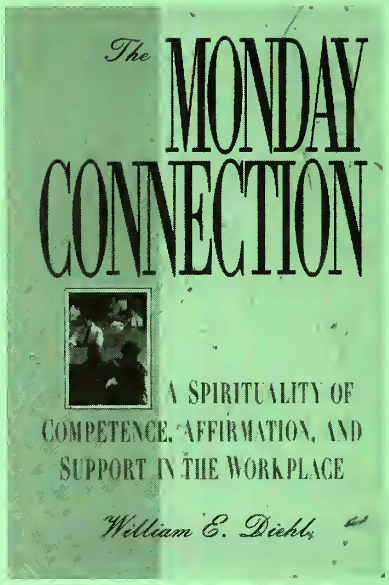
Men have built meetinghouses, shingled roofs together and cleaned up after disasters. Men have gathered for fellowship and for sharing wisdom. Lonely men in urban society gather for sports and for discussing the challenges of Christian discipleship in a society of large corporations and high-tech computers. As the larger society evidences total moral collapse, men gather to support each other in the manly virtues of honesty, faithful marriages and generosity to others.

Wide-awake Mennonite churches in Canada and the United States continue to form Mennonite Men groups to serve the particular needs of their setting.

—Heinz Janzen, editor

Lester Ewy

Luis Naranjo, pastor of Community of Love Mennonite Church near the heart of Philadelphia



The MONDAY CONNECTION

A SPIRITUALITY OF COMPETENCE, AFFIRMATION, AND SUPPORT IN THE WORKPLACE

William E. Diehl

Book Review

The Monday Connection: A Spirituality of Competence, Affirmation, and Support in the Workplace *by William E. Diehl (HarperSanFrancisco, 1991, 200 pages), reviewed by Heinz Janzen*

I began reading this book several years ago and was not impressed at first, so I laid it aside. But then I saw that the 1994 fall convention of Mennonite Economic Development Associates is using *The Monday Connection* as its theme and William Diehl as featured speaker! I had missed a lot!

In this book Diehl first points out the Sunday/Monday gap in so many church members' lives. He found a more vital faith through reading Elton Trueblood, Elizabeth O'Connor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and others.

Diehl's major contribution is pointing a direction toward making work itself a spiritual enterprise—not just any work, but rather work informed by the teaching of Scripture and the theology of the Christian church. Diehl goes on to discuss competency and competition as they relate to a faith commitment. Further chapters relate to being givers and receivers of God's grace. Several chapters deal with ethics in a complex society.

Faithfulness to God requires the courage and know-how to change unethical practices on the job and in public life.

Like Jesus, Diehl reserves the

Local Men In Action

Beatrice, Nebraska

"Hogs to Tecumseh" is a major project of the Beatrice, Neb., Mennonite Men, many of whom are pork producers. Inevitably some of their animals are low grade or are slow to gain weight. These cannot be sold on the normal markets, so the Beatrice men take them to a slaughterhouse at nearby Tecumseh, Neb., to be processed. The meat is federally inspected and then quick-frozen in family-sized packages. The St. John's Community Food Pantry in Beatrice distributes these packages along with other donated foods to those who are needy. The project benefits both givers and receivers.

In 1993 Beatrice Mennonite Men, under the auspices of Mennonite Disaster Service, helped clean up the nearby Dewitt community which was hit successively by tornados and floods. Others did cleanup work in Missouri and Iowa that same year.

Other projects include donating and contructing playground equipment at a local day-care center. They make items to sell at the Nebraska MCC Relief Sale: portable shop lights, sawhorses and shop creepers. These are made at a group work day on a Saturday before the sale. Such a gathering makes for good fellowship. Glen Jantzen, last year's president, wrote, "I enjoy being part of this group. It's a close, caring group ready to help wherever, whenever."

—Glen Jantzen

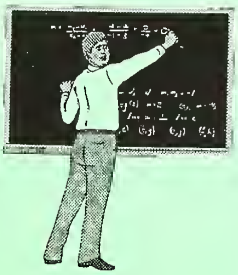
Diehl continued from page 2

best for last in his stewardship chapters. Christian stewardship does not only lead to larger donations to local church and wider mission causes. Believing that God owns all things will also lead to modest consumer spending in order to share with the needy. Diehl resonates with Richard Foster on a simple lifestyle. Lutheran Diehl has a challenge for Mennonite men and women in relating their historic principles to current society.

His final chapter, "Roles and Responsibilities," could well be a charter for a 1990s Mennonite Men or Women in Mission group seeking to be a force for renewal in the church. I recommend this work as a study book for Mennonite Men groups.

State College, Pennsylvania

The University Mennonite Church men's fellowship is essentially an informal breakfast group which meets to talk about whatever is important to anyone. It has no structure and no leadership. One of its founders, a psychologist, felt the need to engage in dialogue or conversation with other men about issues facing participants in the group and in the congregation. By now the group has developed a tradition of meeting twice a month and its agenda is always informal and spontaneous.



The usual composition of the group includes university faculty, graduate students and one or two from the community. It does not sponsor any service projects. As far as I can tell, it serves a useful function of building relationships, sharing concerns and debating issues.

—Ed Rempel, co-pastor,
University Mennonite Church

Upland, California

Three First Mennonite men have had several enjoyable early Wednesday morning meetings with the men from Mountain View Mennonite Church where they meet for breakfast, prayer and Bible study at Molly's Souper, an Upland restaurant. They're studying Paul's letters to Timothy. All men are encouraged to participate.

—Alice Lichti

Regina, Saskatchewan

Joe Neufeld reported on the three men's groups at Grace Mennonite Church. They have both a prayer breakfast and prayer luncheon meeting. Another noontime group prefers messages on various topics. Though each group is small, more men are served by this variety of approaches.

Lansdale, Pennsylvania

The Grace Mennonite Men's Fellowship meets monthly for breakfast and fellowship. Programs vary with messages, videos, travelogues or films. Various pastors from the community speak from time to time. Films and videos vary from Tony Campolo to MDS work to Menno Simons or the flight of Russian Mennonites to Germany and the Americas.

John Schettig writes, "We are quite pleased with our attendance. It averages between 18 and 30 men. We are looking to increase our attendance by personal invitation. With the Lord's leading we plan to continue meeting once a month."

Warmth In Calgary

In February, I traveled to chilly Calgary to present the final $25,000 Tenth Man grant to the thriving Vietnamese Mennonite church there. Pastor Nhiem Pham and chair Hung Vo warmly welcomed me, as did the entire congregation. When a new Mennonite congregation buys or builds its meetinghouse, a multiple partnership is necessary. The local church assesses its needs and ability to pay. Members give generously along with providing a great deal of labor. District and provincial mission committees have provided subsidy to church operations on a declining scale. A little may come from friends, relatives or nearby churches. Necessary loan funds come from the Mennonite Foundation of Canada or Church Extension Services of the General Conference.

Most often additional funds are needed to bridge a gap in the financial package. Tenth Man grant funds aim to complete the funding.

Well over 300 Tenth Man members (including a number of women) gladly give to make these grants possible. We hear long-term donors tell again and again what a joy they have in supporting home mission work in this way. Those whom I know also give generously to all conference causes.

—Heinz Janzen, Coordinator
Mennonite Men

Irene Klassen

Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite Church

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Heinz Janzen, Editor
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Rwandan refugee becomes parent figure to others

Bukavu, Zaire (MCC)—She is called "Mama" by 146 children, yet three months ago she had hardly held a baby in her life. Now she sleeps on the ground with three children, caring for, comforting and loving them.

Three months ago, Aphonsine, 19, was a Rwandan teen studying lab science and considering becoming a Roman Catholic sister. One July evening, as she washed dishes, soldiers entered the house. Hearing shots and screams, she ran out into the night, never to see her family again.

With difficulty she describes what happened. Tears well in her eyes. After leaving the house, she ran to the home of another family who was fleeing Kigali by car. She joined them.

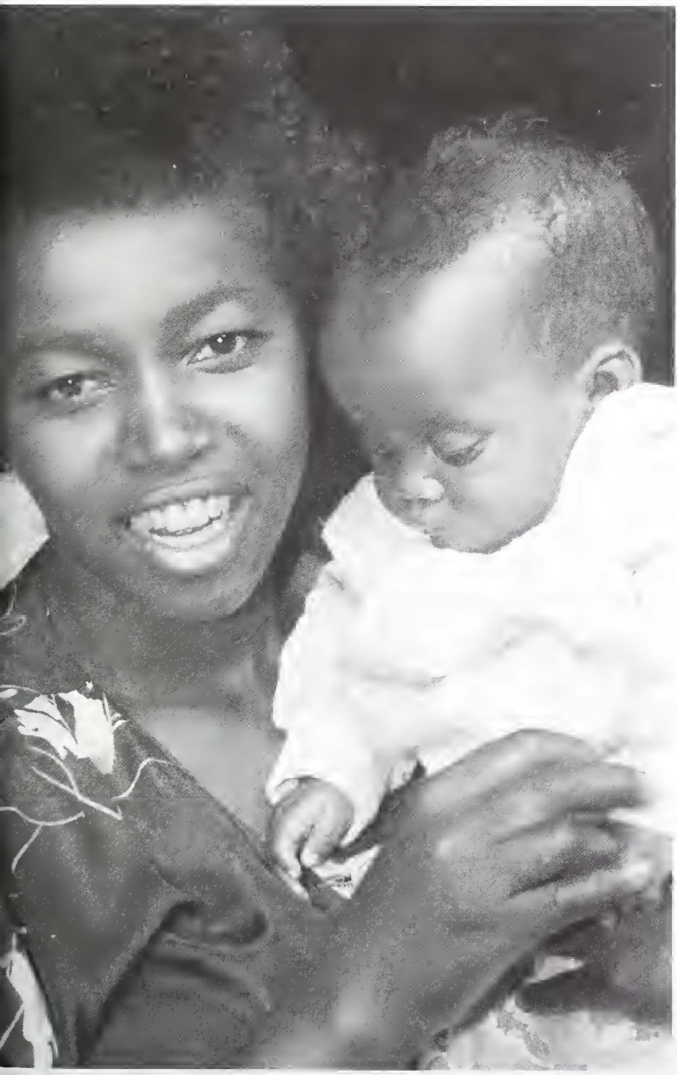
Many times during the journey to eastern Zaire she prayed for God to take her life. Soldiers carrying guns and grenades blocked the roads. They accused her of being a Tutsi—a genetic heritage from her mother—even though she was registered as a Hutu.

When Aphonsine and the others finally arrived here, they set up temporary shelter in a Catholic church compound. Two days later a group of Zairians from Inheritors of Justice, a Mennonite Central Committee-assisted church group, came by looking for orphans and unaccompanied children. Inheritors of Justice was starting Center of Hope, a home for children who were separated from their parents or whose parents were killed during the war and the chaotic flight from Rwanda.

Aphonsine moved to Center of Hope and immediately found that not only had God given her another family but also a love for children. She became not another traumatized orphan needing attention but a woman overflowing with compassion for the other children.

"When I am with the children," says Aphonsine, "I feel good—like I am with my family." The Zairians who run the Center of Hope praise Aphonsine: "She is fantastic," says the chair of the center.

"When I see the children who have replaced my mother, my father, my sisters and brothers," says Aphonsine, "that is enough for me." *Dave Klassen*


Dave Klassen (MCC)

Mother to 146: *Aphonsine holds a baby at the Center of Hope, a project of Inheritors of Justice.*

Inside the news

Seminary contributions exceed hopes / p. 14

Indiana church models new method of mutual aid / p. 15

Scholars fish for a distinctive Mennonite identity / p. 16

Covenant Mennonite Church in Hesston, Kan., has officially disbanded. Covenant functioned as a house church in Hesston for many years.

• • •

Arthur Paul Boers, pastor at Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church, took first place in Harper-Collins Publishers' seventh annual Best Sermons Competition. His sermon "The Great Yes!" bested more than 500 sermons submitted for consideration from around the world.

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Mennonite groups are exiting the health-care debate. Since the U.S. Congress has buried health-care reform for this year and the U.S. public doesn't appear to care, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. and Mennonite Mutual Aid are letting health-care reform lobbying slide off their agenda. "I think the church is not much more excited about health-care reform than the general public," said MCC U.S. board member Don Steelberg of Wichita, Kan., at board meetings in September. "Nothing is happening because nobody is twisting Congress' arm, and the church reflects this attitude." MMA President Howard Brenneman said Mennonites may be even more conservative than the general public about government becoming involved in health care. "The grass roots is saying they're pretty well taken care of and 'let's make sure it's broke before we fix it,'" Brenneman said.

Noe Gonzalia, a Colombian Mennonite pastor, is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., this fall. The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church is providing $15,000 for his studies.

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Bluffton (Ohio) College has announced the creation of the Carl Smucker Distinguished Lectureship Series honoring an emeritus professor who started the social work program at the college 50 years ago. The series will bring annually to the college a speaker who has made significant contributions to the field of social work.

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Over 300 Mennonite churches have participated in the Living in Faithful Evangelism (LIFE) program, which was started in 1988. At a Sept. 23-24 meeting in Sioux Falls, S.D., planners met to review the results of the program and to plan follow-up in 1996. They said three points should guide any follow-up: (1) to develop a mission conscience and spiritual vitality in churches; (2) to instill a passion for evangelism in leadership; (3) to help churches articulate the uniqueness of our Anabaptist faith. The representatives tentatively agreed on "Congregational Evangelism: Building on Our Strengths" as a title for a new project. Churches that are looking for evangelism resources between February 1995 and February 1996 will be able to receive help by calling a toll-free number at the Andrew Center, a center based at the Church of the Brethren offices in Elgin, Ill., that provides services related to church growth and evangelism. For more information, contact Marilyn Miller, Commission on Home Ministries, 2000 Dartmouth, Boulder, CO 80303, (303) 499-1565, or Tym Elias, Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781.

Seminary exceeds campaign goal

Campaign Progress

J. Tyler Klassen

Low expectations: *"We have missed our goal," Marlin E. Miller, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, tells a crowd of almost 200. Already more than $5 million has been committed in the first year of the seminary's Partners for Ministry campaign, instead of the target of $4 million.*

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—"We have missed our goal," Marlin E. Miller, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, told a crowd of almost 200 on Sunday, Sept. 18.

Already more than $5 million has been committed in the first year of the seminary's Partners for Ministry campaign, Miller announced, instead of the target of $4 million. This total comprises 43 percent of the seminary's goal of $11.9 million in the 3 1/2-year effort.

The occasion for the report was a celebration of the successful beginning of the campaign and dedication of the Lambright Center. The center, the first visible sign of the campaign, will become the hub of the AMBS continuing education program.

The center is named in honor of Goldie Lambright and the late Robert L. Lambright of Shipshewana, Ind., who died in 1992. Robert, with his two sons, owned the Shipshewana Auction and Flea Market. The family made a major contribution to the project.

Miller described the center as a "partly recycled" building that was formerly the dormitory for single men. Residence rooms have been converted into larger seminar rooms, the kitchen has been expanded, and a new dining room has been added.

Contributions from families, area businesses and contractors have helped make the continuing education center a reality. One hundred twenty-two volunteers from as far away as Kansas and British Columbia contributed 183 days of volunteer labor. A "building blitz" day last spring and continued volunteer help through the summer have demonstrated the kind of church and community involvement AMBS hopes will continue in the center.

The theme of partnership undergirds the 3 1/2-year fund drive. Emphases in the campaign include enhancing support for faculty, increasing funds for student aid, expanding the library and providing support for teaching in areas such as missions and evangelism. The goal of $11.9 million also includes support for the ongoing program of AMBS during the campaign.

Pointing to the center, Miller said, "The Partners for Ministry campaign has already begun to make a contribution to the seminary and to the life of the church." *Mary E. Klassen*

Indiana church practices creative mutual aid

Goshen, Ind. (*Elkhart Truth*)—Melinda Butler didn't break new ground when she needed a home this summer, but her church did when they financed the purchase of a house for the single mother.

Individuals at Assembly Mennonite Church here, where Butler has attended more than three years, spearheaded an effort to raise $75,000 for a house, which she found about a week prior to the day she had to move out of her former home.

"I'd like to have a banner that depicts what happened," Butler said. "I want this banner to say, 'A gift of God through the love of friends.'"

Some 34 investors, mostly from the church, agreed to contribute money to the Faith Investment Group for the purpose of buying Butler a house. Contributions from individuals and couples ranged from $2,000 to $15,000.

In the end, the sum had grown to $75,200, with a $200 donation from someone who wished to contribute but not invest. When the final bill came, including closing costs on the $74,900 sale, they had only a few cents left over.

Butler, a 1993 graduate of Goshen College, knew she needed to find a place to live this summer. She and her children, ranging in age from 8 to 18, had been in student housing at the college and needed to leave their home by the end of July.

When the corporation was formed last spring, she was working part time as director of the domestic abuse program for the YWCA in Goshen, but her hours were being reduced.

In summer she drove up and down the streets, praying and looking for "For Sale" signs. "I just knew God had a house for me," she said.

But no bank would lend money to her. "For one reason or another I didn't qualify," she said.

Many turned her away because she hadn't held a full-time job for a number of years. When she and her husband split up seven years ago, she was nursing one child, and two were in diapers. She became a full-time, straight-A student, full-time single mom and worked at the YWCA part time.

"Nobody's going to take you on who you are, they're only going to take your numbers," she said.

The people at Assembly looked at more than the numbers. Initially they thought they would come up with the down-payment. Then they decided to bypass lending institutions altogether and form their own alternative. The idea came from a church in California that took on a similar effort.

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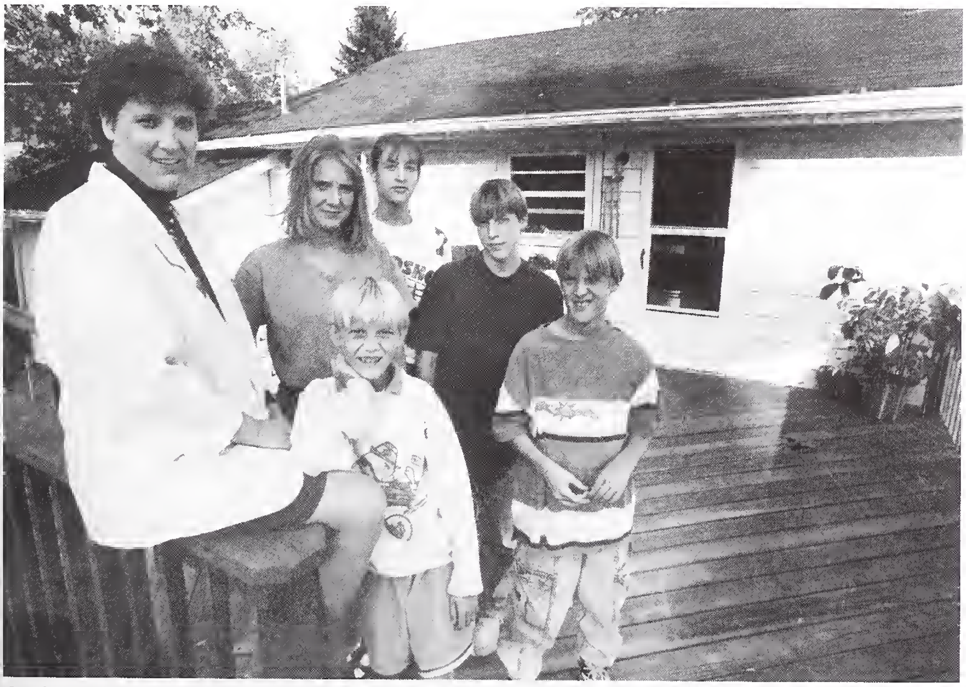

Tyler Klassen

A gift of God: *Melinda Butler and five of her six children stand in front of her house, bought by her church. From left: Melinda, Ami, Alyssa, Garrett, Jessie; center: Zachary*

First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie, Kan., celebrated its 110th anniversary on Aug. 7.

* * *

After a 35-year hiatus, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary president Marlin E. Miller returned to Japan for four weeks of teaching June 17 through July 18. Miller taught two seminars under the auspices of the Anabaptist Center in Tokyo, led by retired missionaries Peter and Lois Voran. Visiting the peace monuments at Hiroshima, Miller met a Baptist woman who as a young teenager survived the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. "She told us that the bomb was a handicap to becoming a Christian, and even though she is a Baptist, she still can't understand why Christians were involved with the bomb," Miller said.

* * *

Thirty-five Mennonite bicyclists spent five days in August in Oregon biking 315 miles for Mennonite Central Committee. The group included people from Pennsylvania, California, Oregon, Washington, Indiana, Arizona, Michigan and Virginia representing Mennonite, Southern Baptist, Assemblies of God, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Evangelical Covenant, Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ churches. The next "MCC Bike Oregon" trip is being tentatively planned for Aug. 5-9, 1996. For information on that ride contact West Coast MCC, 1010 G. St., Reedley, CA 93654, phone (209) 638-6911. An East Coast trip is tentatively planned for summer 1995. For information on that ride contact MCC East Coast, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, phone (717) 859-1151.

Florida City, Fla., has declared Aug. 25 of each year to be "Mennonite Appreciation Day" in honor of the Mennonites who rebuilt over 160 homes and gave other assistance to victims of Hurricane Andrew. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

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The United States and France top lists of top 10 nations sending missionaries and top 10 nations receiving missionaries. Americans have a net outflow of 49,000 missionaries, sending 69,000 abroad and receiving 20,000 from abroad. The French send 15,000 and receive 25,000. The influx of missionaries in both countries is caused by large-scale immigration of ethnic groups who are followed by religious workers seeking to establish centers of worship. (*MARC Newsletter*)

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Mutual Aid Research Grants are being offered to candidates interested in research in the area of mutual aid. Eight research stipends of $1,500 each plus some expenses are available. Areas of study may include Bible, church history (especially Anabaptist), theology, ethics, sociology, 18th- to 20th-century history, Mennonite Mutual Aid history and changing patterns of mutual aid. The project is jointly sponsored by the Institute of Mennonite Studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and Mennonite Mutual Aid, Goshen, Ind. Applications from scholars are welcome by Dec. 10. Culture, gender and denominational affiliation (Mennonite Brethren, General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church) will be considered. For a prospectus and application, write to Mutual Aid Project, Institute of Mennonite Studies, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, or call on Mondays, Tuesdays or Thursdays at (219) 296-6239.

When a house was found the group made an offer. Their offer was one of three that day, but it was accepted.

In August she was asked to apply for a sixth-grade teaching position at Goshen Middle School. A week after she signed the papers on her house, she got the job.

Larry Gautsche, general partner for Faith Investment Group, emphasizes it's not a charity case but an investment. He said the risk is minimal and the rate of return is comparable to what people might earn on a long-term certificate of deposit.

"It's offering Melinda an opportunity and it's doing it in a way that offers dignity with it," he said. "We're giving her a chance; we're not giving her charity." *Marshall V. King*

Scholars search for a distinct Mennonite identity

Goshen, Ind. (*Elkhart Truth*)—Fifty years after the publication of an address that gave an identity to generations of Mennonites, the "Anabaptist Vision" perhaps has become diffused.

With no war to test the peace stance and neither plain clothes, language nor strict discipline to separate them visibly from the larger society, Mennonites continue to wrestle with an identity crisis.

"Fifty years after 'The Anabaptist Vision,' Mennonites seek to discern who they are in light of a rapidly fading ethnic identity and much in common with both Protestants and Catholics," said J. Denny Weaver, a professor at Bluffton (Ohio) College. "The demise of ethnicity leaves Mennonites with nothing unique."

But as a "who's who" of Mennonite scholars and church leaders met Oct. 13-15 at Goshen College here, they tried to get a sense of the future of their tradition by looking at their past, personified in one man who some described as an "icon" for two generations of Mennonites.

Harold S. Bender, a historian and dean at Goshen College and Goshen Biblical Seminary, founded the Mennonite Historical Society; its journal, *Mennonite Quarterly Review (MQR)*, and edited the four-volume *Mennonite Encyclopedia*. But the watershed moment in Bender's career came when, as president of the American Society of Church Historians, he delivered the address "The Anabaptist Vision" at the height of World War II.

Bender's address concentrated the central teaching of the Reformation's radical wing into three points: "the essence of Christianity as discipleship, … the church as brotherhood and a new ethic of love and nonresistance."

But Goshen College's centennial conference, "Anabaptist Vision(s) in the 20th Century: Ideas and Outcomes," illustrated the diversity of definitions of that vision. Various scholars said the vision should be grounded in urban ministry, peace activism and in greater communion with the body.

"The Mennonite church is in danger of merely becoming a mainline denomination," said John Oyer, a Goshen College professor of history and former *MQR* editor.

"It seems to me we're all faced with this kind of bulldozer power of a mass society in which the momentum is toward a homogenized society on a lowest-common-denominator level. Can the Mennonites escape this?" asked Vincent Harding, professor of religion and social transformation at Iliff Seminary in Denver.

Loaded gun: Harding, an African-American Anabaptist, described manifestations of that vision, including examples from civil rights struggles. He recounted an experience years ago when he and two white Mennonites sat in a southern cafeteria where they were refused service. Eventually they went to talk to the manager.

"As we began to talk about our Christian faith, the man reached down under the cash register and pulled out a pistol. That was the closest we came to the Anabaptist martyrs," he said.

"Somehow I sense the Anabaptist vision will not be fulfilled unless we continue to struggle with the Bosnias, the Haitis, the Evanstons and the death rows," he said.

Weaver, meanwhile, argued for Mennonites to stand by their forbears' insistence that one cannot accept the gospel without accepting Jesus' teachings to reject violence and warfare. "Those activities are more of a threat to American society than a church marked by plain dress or a different language," Weaver said.

"There are different perceptions of

'The Anabaptist Vision.' It defies precise definition," said Robert Kreider, curator of the Mirror of the Martyrs exhibit at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. "It is a web of relationships, of bonding, of connectedness. It is best encapsulated not in precise definition but in poetry and hymns, in singing and story, the way of the Psalms."

"What is the alternative that will preserve our identity, on the one hand, … and do that while we are participating in an extremely powerful culture that wants to suck us up?" asked conference organizer Albert Keim, professor of history at Eastern Mennonite University.

Susan Fisher Miller, author of "Culture for Service: A History of Goshen College, 1894-1994," described how Bender drew on Mennonite history to set direction for the college following a modernist controversy of the early 1920s.

"Bender offered a trap door, an escape hatch to a wider perspective," according to Miller, leading several conference participants to compare Bender's role to that of Swiss theologian Karl Barth in fashioning an alternative between fundamentalism and liberalism.

"Except for my own father, no one has influenced me more," said United Methodist Franklin H. Littel, author of "The Free Church" and professor emeritus of religion at Temple University. "[Bender's work] led me to depart from the established defamation of the Anabaptist radicals of the 16th century."

As Mennonites cite the Bible on both sides in debates over abortion and homosexuality, Littel offered some advice: "I believe in the power of the Spirit to overcome such impasses," he said.

When the first Quaker abolitionists surfaced in 1688, the Society of Friends tried to hear what God was telling them through the Scriptures. It wasn't until 1774 when the Quakers decided "no member of that society could hold people as chattel," Littel said. "They only lost two members. They had prayed and worked seriously at it.

"That's 90 years," Littel acknowledged, "but they were still 100 years ahead of the rest of us. That is the way Scripture is to be read. … Let's be people with a calling and then the Lord will tell us what we ought to be."
Tom Price

Mennonite Central Committee joined with Lutheran World Relief to send more than 2 million antibiotic tablets to India to fight pneumonic plague. The tablets arrived in Bombay on Sept. 30. MCC's share is valued at $8,500 Cdn./$6,200 U.S., one-third of the total cost. MCC India has also contributed $1,300 Cdn./$950 U.S. to produce information leaflets. Glen Miller, MCC India country representative and a medical doctor, says mortality without treatment is as high as 50 percent. With early treatment mortality is about 5 percent. As of Sept. 29 there were at least 1,500 confirmed cases of pneumonic plague and 70 officially reported deaths. On Oct. 7 the Plague Control Centre in Delhi, India, reported 6,000 suspected cases nationwide, according to Miller.

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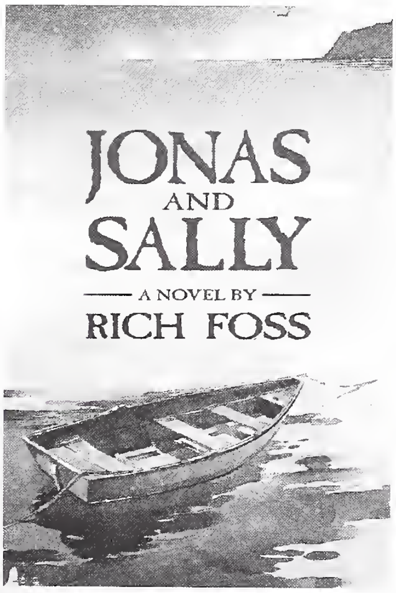

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—Sally Schreiner, *Festival Quarterly*

6 x 9 • 336 pages • hardcover • $19.95

Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
SALT—Serving and Learning Together
MBM—Mennonite Board of Missions

A Roper survey reported on in *Business Ethics* has found that 78 percent of consumers say they would choose a product made by a company that contributes to social causes over one made by a company that doesn't. (*The Marketplace*)

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If the world's population were reduced to 100 people, without changing ratios now existing in the total population, the 100 people would contain 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 North and South Americans, 8 Africans. Of the 100, 30 would be white, 50 would be malnourished, 80 would live in substandard housing, 70 would be unable to read and one would have a university education. Half the wealth would be in the hands of six U.S. citizens. (*Mennonite Camping Association Newsletter*)

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The world's population has reached 5.7 billion and is expected to reach 8.5 billion in 2025, says a report released Aug. 17 by the United Nations Population Fund. World population has more than doubled since 1950, when it was 2.5 billion, the report says. Africa's growth rate is 2.9 percent a year, the fastest in the world. In 1950, there were fewer people in Africa than in Europe; there are now 681.7 million people in Africa, 512 million in Europe. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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The number of new American jobs that can be created in the civilian economy far exceeds the number of jobs that will be lost as a result of military spending reductions, claims *The Defense Monitor*. Granted appropriate government policies, as many as 6 million new jobs can be foreseen over the next 10 to 12 years, over and above those created by normal economic growth. These jobs would include the fields of energy, environment, health, crime prevention and nuclear cleanup. Other jobs could also come from expansion of U.S. exports. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

MINISTERS

Anita Amstutz is half-time interim pastor at First Church, San Francisco.

Eldin Classen is interim pastor at Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.

Weldon Nisly will begin March 1, 1995, as pastor of Seattle Church.

Gary and **Margaret Peters** were licensed June 19 as pastors of Hanley (Sask.) Church.

Amanda Rempel is chaplain at Kidron-Bethel Retirement Center in North Newton, Kan.

Emilio Zabala is church planter among Spanish-speaking people for Peace Community Church, Clovis, Calif.

WORKERS

Michael Bade, Seattle Church, began a three-year MCC assignment in August in Akron, Pa., as a video producer.

Melba Bechtel, Eighth Street Church, Goshen, Ind., began a 3 1/2-month MCC term in August in Akron, Pa., where she works as a mail order clerk with Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Bechtel

Henry and **Lynda Braul**, Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, are beginning 3 1/2-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa., with Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Tabitha Brubacher, Calvary Church, Monetville, Ont., is serving with the Winnipeg unit of MCC Canada's SALT program.

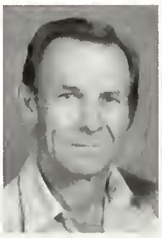
Frieda Derksen, Bergthal Church, Didsbury, Alta., is beginning a 3 1/2-month MCC term in Akron, Pa., where she will work as a cook at Nav Jiwan Tea Room.

Henry Dizney, Eugene (Ore.) Church, began a four-month MCC term in August in Akron, Pa., where he works as a pricing table supervisor for Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Karin and **Richard Dyck**, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, and Faith Church, Leamington, Ont., are beginning two-year MCC terms in Ephrata and Akron, Pa., respectively. Karin will be working as packing supervisor at the MCC Material Resource Center and Richard as a stocking clerk at the Self-Help Crafts of the World warehouse.

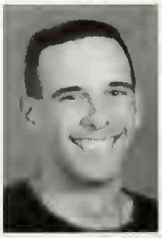
Lara Ewert, North Star Church, Drake, Sask., is serving with the Waterloo, Ont., unit of MCC Canada's SALT program.

Megan Falk, Lethbridge (Alta.) Church and Fort Garry Fellowship, Winnipeg, is beginning a 2 1/2-year MCC term in Montreal, where she will serve as a community worker at the


H. Braul

L. Braul

K. Dyck


R. Dyck

Falk

Fast

J. Friesen

L. Friesen

M. Hofer

S. Hofer

House of Friendship.

Roberta Fast, Hope Church, Winnipeg, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Atlanta, where she will work as co-teacher at Family Place, a daycare and preschool.

John and **Lydia Friesen**, Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, began 3 1/2-month MCC terms in August in Akron, Pa. John works as a wholesale order processor and Lydia as a returns clerk with Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Jonathan Gibson and **Linda Hubbard Gibson**, West Philadelphia Fellowship, are beginning two-year MCC terms in Dog Creek, B.C., as economic development workers.

Cindy Harms, Crystal City (Man.) Church, is serving with the Winnipeg unit of MCC Canada's SALT program.

Julie Hildebrand, Crystal City (Man.) Church, is serving with the Waterloo, Ont., unit of MCC Canada's SALT program.

Matthias and **Sylvia Isaak Hofer** of Muttenz, Switzerland, are beginning three-year MCC terms in January 1995, in Ghanzi, Botswana, as assistant preschool coordinators.

Derek Hostetler, Portland (Ore.) Church, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, where he will work in project management and as office coordinator.

Geoffrey Janssen, Eighth Street Church, Goshen, Ind., has begun a 10 1/2-month term with MBM's Service Adventure program. He is a teacher's assistant in Philippi, W.Va.

Marie and **Maurice Janzen**, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., are beginning 3 1/2-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa., as packing clerks at Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Sonya Klassen, Trinity Fellowship, Mather, Man., is serving with the Winnipeg unit of MCC Canada's SALT program.

Eric and **Kimberly Kurtz**, West Philadelphia Church, have begun three-year MCC terms in Mozambique as community development workers; Eric in water development and Kimberly in nutrition and agriculture education.

Anne and **John Lamman**, Fort Collins (Colo.) Fellowship, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Uganda. Anne will work in community development, nutrition and women's development, John in community development and natural resources management. Both previously served with MCC in Somalia.

John M. and **Naomi K. Lederach** are beginning three- to five-year MCC terms in Belfast, Northern Ireland. They will be working as counselors at a mediation center. They previously served with MCC in Jerusalem.

Carrie Martin, Assembly Church, Goshen, Ind., is serving with the Waterloo, Ont., unit of MCC Canada's SALT program.

Brian Penner, Emmanuel Church, Clearbrook, B.C., is beginning a two-year MCC term in Florida City, Fla., where he will work as a volunteer coordinator.

Ruth Quiring, First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, is serving with the Waterloo, Ont., unit of MCC Canada's SALT program.

Neptali Rivera, Amor Viviente Church, Brooklyn, N.Y., is beginning a one-year MCC service internship term at the church there.

Jonathan Seiling, Bethel Church, Elora, Ont., is beginning a five-month MCC student internship assignment in Moscow, Russia.

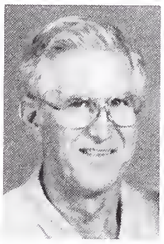
Heather Slivinski, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, is serving with the Waterloo, Ont., unit of MCC Canada's SALT program.

Barbara Toews, Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, Calif., and Akron (Pa.) Church, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Lancaster, Pa., where she will work as director of Lancaster Area Victim Offender Reconciliation Program.

Emil and **Minerva Yoder**, Trinity Church, Glendale, Ariz., are beginning four-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa. Emil will be working as a packer and Minerva as an order processor for Self-Help Crafts of the World.

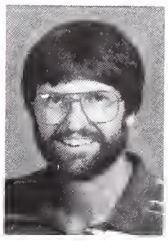
G. Janssen

Marie Janzen

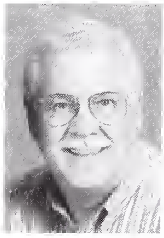


Maurice Janzen

A. Lamman



J. Lamman



J. Lederach

N. Lederach

Penner

Toews

Position opening beginning **fall 1995: Director of Aviation**. Master's degree preferred.

Send letter of application, biographical résumé and names of three references to **James Mininger, Academic Dean, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062, (316) 327-8206.** Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

A MENNO Project (Mennonites Encountering New Neighbors Overseas) service and learning opportunity is planned for **Colombia Feb. 4-18, 1995.** MENNO Project needs 10 volunteers to work with Colombian Mennonites in local work projects while getting acquainted with another culture and people. This is sponsored by the Colombian Mennonite church and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

For information, contact **COM, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.**

Food service director needed at **Camp Friedenswald**, Cassopolis, Mich. The successful applicant shall possess an interest in working within a camping ministry, the ability to manage a food service program efficiently, expertise and experience in preparing quality meals for groups up to 250, and a willingness to work with volunteers. This is a full-time, salaried position with housing, health insurance and utilities provided.

Business manager or administrative assistant needed at **Camp Friedenswald.** The successful applicant shall possess an interest in working within a camping ministry, a background in business and/or accounting, an ability to work with word processing and accounting software, strong interpersonal skills and an ability to serve people seeking retreat in the "peaceful woods." Supervisory expertise is also desired. The level of supervisory expertise will determine the exact position.

People interested in either of the above positions should send a résumé with references to **Doug Luginbill, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031, (616) 476-2426.**

Mennonite Central Committee invites applications for the position of:

Executive Secretary

Starting date: January 1996
Location: Akron, Pennsylvania
Applications will be accepted through November 30, 1994.

Direct inquires and applications to:
Paul Quiring, Chair, Search Committee
6548 North Thorne Street, Fresno, CA 93711

Work phone: (209) 432-2800
Home phone: (209) 431-8290

Mennonite
Central
Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
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17501-0500
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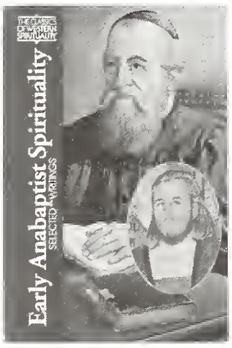
Reviews

BOOKS

ANABAPTIST BEGINNINGS

Early Anabaptist Spirituality, *translated and edited by Daniel Liechty (Paulist Press, 1994, 304 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor


THE CLASSICS OF WESTERN SPIRITUALITY
Early Anabaptist Spirituality
SELECTED WRITINGS

The Classics of Western Spirituality series adds to its broad scope with this selection of writings by early Anabaptist leaders. Daniel Liechty provides an excellent introduction, which summarizes the origins and spirituality of early Anabaptism. His writing is succinct, clear and shows a thorough acquaintance with the scholarship of early Anabaptism.

Liechty places his selections under four categories of Anabaptism: Swiss, South German and Austrian, Hutterian and Dutch. He includes works by Felix Mantz, Balthasar Hubmaier, the *Ausbund*, Hans Hut, Leonard Schiemer, Hans Schlaffer, Hans Denck, Peter Walpot, Dirk Philips and Menno Simons.

The selections seem long and not always relevant to contemporary issues, but you get a sense of the issues the church struggled with in 16th-century Europe. For example, the Anabaptists wrote much about free will vs. predestination, arguing the need for the former. Some leaders argued strenuously against what they considered false teachers among the Anabaptists. For example, Dirk Philips opposed the kind of teaching that led to the Münsterite debacle.

If you don't want to read through all the selections, at least read Liechty's introduction. It provides as fine a summary of early Anabaptist beliefs as you'll find in so short a space. The book also includes a select bibliography.

TOUCHING OUT OF TOUCH KIDS

Don't Touch My Heart: Healing the Pain of an Unattached Child *by Lynda Gianforte Mansfield and Christopher H. Waldmann (Pinon Press/NavPress, 1994, 111 pages)*

Reviewed by Bonita Suter, Newton, Kan.

Don't Touch My Heart is a story of a hypothetical child, Jonathan, who experienced the terror of child sexual abuse, neglect and abandonment, emotional and physical abuse prior to the age of 4. These events led to a diagnosis of "attachment disorder."

According to the authors, attachment disorder manifests itself when a child does not bond with anyone during infancy. Abuse and neglect are often involved as well, and such children often believe that they cannot trust anyone. The book also introduces "holding therapy," which "teaches a child that giving up control can help him or her to experience love and trust instead of abuse and abandonment."

The reader follows Jonathan to foster homes, back to his mother's house, to a children's home, and finally to the home of foster parents who are willing to work toward adopting Jonathan. The book is written as a story, broken into short scenes of Jonathan's life. It describes some of the abuse that he experienced at an early age and the ways in which his behavior mimicked the way that he had been treated.

The authors give examples of ways Jonathan manipulates those around him and how he enjoys getting the other children in the foster home in trouble. Jonathan acts out in ways that his foster parents cannot understand in order to protect himself from being hurt.

It is disappointing that some phrases used in this book are problem-centered rather than child-centered. While the phrase "child with attachment disorder" may seem cumbersome, it could easily have been substituted for "attachment disordered child," a phrase used by the authors on more than one occasion. Children are much more than any disorder, and child-centered vocabulary attempts to emphasize that fact.

Aside from terminology, the authors were successful in educating this reader about characteristics of attachment disorder and the techniques involved in holding therapy. I would recommend the book as easy reading for parents and professionals who wish to learn the basics of these topics. I would also recommend it to family members, even middle-school children with a sibling dealing with these issues, as long as it is followed by discussion with an adult.

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MENNO MUSICAL MADNESS

Closer Than They Appear, *Mennonite Distorter Band (self-produced audiocassette, $12 Cdn., order from P.O. Box 27041, Winnipeg, MB R3C 3Z0)*

Reviewed by Ben Chappell, Newton, Kan.

The Distorter Band provides an accurate picture of the state of young Mennonites in its audiocassette release *Closer Than They Appear.* Earnest, yet still irreverent, challenging tradition while resigning to it, the Distorter Band could easily have been formed around a jam session after a triennial conference youth program. Or maybe after a few too many cups of coffee in the snack bar of a Mennonite college.

True to their origins, somehow associated with the humorous periodical *The Mennonite Distorter*, the band employs an irreverent satire that can be a scream to those well-versed in Mennonite rituals. The "Ballad of Willie Reimer" is a case in point, a tale of the "Mennonite Game" spun out of control. Funny stuff but easily missed by those who have never been asked, "Now, which Thieszens are your parents?" Also in the irreverent vein are the send-ups "More Ways to Baptize Than One," "Luther Don't Allow," "New Age Blues," a polkafied "Gott ist Die Liebe," and others.

Closer Than They Appear is not easily classified as a novelty piece, however. Behind some of the gags is sincere theological challenge, evident in the holy "She" used in "Why God Made Country Music." There are also dead-serious protest songs, like the Industrial Workers of the World classic "Still Ain't Satisfied," updated to a feminist perspective, the 1980s darling "Harriet Tubman," and "Roki's Dream," a eulogy for a Sarajevan schoolboy that segues into the familiar "Finlandia" hymn.

Technically, the cassette is on the level of a top-quality demo, with just a hair too much phony reverb on occasion. *Closer Than They Appear* would likely compare favorably with any recording provided by the staff of a magazine in North America today.

The overall package is a collage, a bit confused at times, but diverse. The bluegrass/old-time styles reflect the current revival of interest in an "unplugged," back-to-basics approach to music, but tracks like "Roki's Dream" also make it clear that the songwriters have listened to their share of progressive rock. This diversity makes sense, considering the Distorter Band's dual status as members of "a generation without a name" and of a religious community interested in the world but not of it. These dualities produce publications like the *Distorter* or the Elkhart-based *Mennonot*, and once in a while a musical effort that strikes a familiar chord.

Resources

- **Spirituality, Stress and You** by Thomas E. Rodgerson (Paulist Press, 1994, $3.95 U.S.) provides practical stress beaters and shows that instead of being an enemy, stress may be a spiritual wake-up call for renewal.
- **Learning to Lead** (MBM Media Ministries, 1-800-999-3534, $24.95 U.S./$34.95 Cdn.) is a video by Palmer Becker for training small-group leaders how to lead a small group or Bible study. An accompanying book, **Called to Equip** (Herald Press, 1993, $6.95 U.S./$9.95 Cdn.) by Palmer Becker, offers help with setting up and maintaining a care-group ministry.
- **Living with Conviction: German Army Captain Turns to Cultivating Peace** by Siegfried Bartel (CMBC Publications, $15 Cdn.) tells Bartel's story of being in Hitler's army and the development of his Christian pacifism. Available from MCC offices in Canada.
- **American Mennonites and the Great War, 1914-1918** by Gerlof D. Homan (Herald Press, 1994, $19.95 U.S./$28.50 Cdn.) tells the story of Mennonites who tried to remain faithful during the hysteric patriotism of "the Great War."
- **A Winding Path** by Carrie Bender (Herald Press, 1994, $6.95 U.S./$9.95 Cdn.) is the second in the Miriam's Journal fiction series on Amish family life.
- **Going Places** by Merle Good (Good Books, 1994, $6.95 U.S.) is a three-act drama probing the changes experienced by a Mennonite family against a backdrop of international events.
- **The Comforting Whirlwind: God, Job and the Scale of Creation** by Bill McKibben (Eerdmans, 1994, $8.99 U.S.) looks at the story of Job for insight into the environmental crisis, challenging our assumption that we are at the center of everything.
- **Family-Based Youth Ministry** by Mark DeVries (InterVarsity, 1994, $11.99 U.S.) involves the whole church in youth ministry. Includes over 100 ideas for getting started.
- **The Topical Family Bible Companion** by Janice Y. Cook (InterVarsity, 1994, $8.99 U.S.) offers 52 weeks of Bible studies, including topical studies on family issues, activities, holiday studies and helps for parents. Especially for families with children ages 4 to 14.
- **Cup of Water, Bread of Life** by Ronald J. Sider (Zondervan, 1994, $9.99 U.S./$13.50 Cdn.) tells of individuals and churches who bridge the gap between evangelism and social ministry.
- **Your Wife Was Sexually Abused** by John Courtright and Dr. Sid Rogers (Zondervan, 1994, $10.99 U.S./$15 Cdn.) is written for husbands trying to cope with the feelings involved in living with a woman who is recovering from past sexual abuse.
- **Companion to Narnia** by Paul F. Ford (HarperCollins, 1994, $15 U.S./$20.50 Cdn.) is a dictionary, glossary and encyclopedia in one volume, serving as a guide to C.S. Lewis' imaginary world.
- **A Dangerous Grace** by Charles Colson (Word, 1994, $19.99 hardcover, $15.99 audiocassette) is a collection of daily readings, compiled from Colson's writings, exploring how dangerous obedience must be at the heart of our faithfulness to God.
- **The Nearest in Affection: Toward a Christian Understanding of Islam** by Stuart E. Brown (World Council of Churches, 1994, $8.95 U.S., 1-800-523-8211) looks at points of contact for Christian-Muslim encounter.
- **Common Roots, New Horizons: Learning about Christian Faith from Dialogue with Jews** by Hans Ucko (World Council of Churches, $8.50 U.S., 1-800-523-8211) contains insights gleaned from recent decades of ecumenical dialogue between Christians and Jews.

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Editorial

The long view

We live in short-sighted times. People want instant gratification, and advertisements cater to such desires. In the vicious political climate today in the United States, no one takes the long view of history. People forget what happened a few months ago, let alone how a previous administration performed.

Our values tend to be short-sighted as well. We want solutions now rather than to invest in the slow work of changing behavior and bringing about greater justice. For example, rather than place more resources into making children safer, healthier and better educated, our society instead builds more prisons or seeks tougher laws. Rather than work to prevent crime, we want a quick fix: "Lock 'em up." Yet it fixes nothing.

Is the church much different? Our goals tend to be short-term. We want instant church growth. We want a church that meets our needs now; we don't want to make the effort to help build a strong church. We tend to treat pastors like the owners of teams often treat coaches: "What have you done for me lately?"

For people in our time, the title of our first article, "The Secret of Productivity" (page 3), will sound appealing. But they may be disappointed. As authors Marlene Kropf and Eddy Hall point out, Jesus' "secret" is not some new technique. Rather it is to abide in the love of God. Unlike church attendance or budget income, abiding is difficult to measure. Furthermore, abiding takes time. And that, I venture to guess, is what makes it so hard.

On Oct. 22 my father celebrated his 80th birthday. Our family—his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and in-laws—honored him with a scrapbook filled with letters and photos recalling memories of his influence in our lives. As I looked through the book and watched people—family and friends—come to the house to wish him a happy birthday, I felt awed by how much he had affected other people's lives in a positive way without much fanfare.

Productivity: My father did nothing that would make headlines in a newspaper or be grist for a best-selling biography. Instead, day by day, throughout his life, he worked hard to make a living, to provide a safe home for his family. And when crises arose, which they did, he hung in with what support he could offer. He didn't bail out, leave or tell any of his family or friends to leave. He may not always have had the right words to say or have done the right thing in each situation, but he did his best. He did nothing spectacular, yet his productivity in terms of helping create and support many other individuals is great.

Prayer will change us, but it takes time. By faith, we must simply pray each day, even when we don't feel like it.

Prayer is like that. When we pray we may not—likely will not—see immediate results. Prayer will change us, but it takes time. By faith, we must simply pray each day, even when we don't feel like it.

Faith is often just sticking with something, not giving up. The writer to the Hebrews in the New Testament encourages his readers to hang in there, even when they are facing persecution. Chapter 11 of that book offers many examples of believers who remained faithful without seeing any results.

That is the essence of faith.

My father's faithfulness has borne much fruit, even though it's taken 80 years. In the long view, that's not so long a time.

As a father writes to his daughter (see pages 6-7), the life of prayer is a journey. It is not a quick fix. It takes time. It involves taking one step at a time, day by day. Learning to abide in the love of God requires time, patience, perseverance. Yet if we want to bear fruit, there is no greater calling. *Gordon Houser*

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For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.
109: 22
NOVEMBER 22, 1994

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The gambling mania

- The craze for luck (see page 3)
- The longest quarter mile in Mississippi (see page 6)
- Courting the lucky dollar (see page 8)
- How to fight the Las Vegas looters (see page 9)

CASINO
BINGO
PLAY
BANK
PASS
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Prologue

It wasn't too many generations back that many Mennonites refused to use playing cards because of cards' association with gambling. Times change.

Few Mennonites today balk at a game of cards. Increasing numbers of us are participating in gambling as well. Perhaps our forebears were right. Perhaps playing cards did lead us to gambling.

In this issue of *The Mennonite*, we look at the current state of gambling in North America. Harold Jantz looks at the social and personal issues that current gambling practices raise (page 3). Glenn Myers, a minister to a Mennonite Choctaw congregation that is near a casino, talks about the casino's impact on his community (page 6). Rich Minder shows what could happen to a community that depends on gambling for economic stability (page 8), and Jim Reed shares how people in Illinois kept a casino out of their community (page 9).

I do not advocate giving up cards. But perhaps it is worth reexamining what beliefs originally led us to live cardless.

Also with this issue we mourn the loss of our seminary president, Marlin Miller (see page 15). Pray for our seminary community as it grieves his loss. *lp*

Next issue: Advent stories

Cover: Design by John Hiebert

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How should Christians respond to the gambling craze that is sweeping North America?

The craze for luck

Harold Jantz

A gambling craze is sweeping over North America. Some time ago only one state in the United States had legalized gambling. Today 48 do. Virtually all over Canada it's the same story.

> **Professing Christian faith is no guarantee that we will be able to say no to gambling, either privately or publicly.**

To complicate the matter, much of the gambling, especially on the Canadian side of the border, is government-sponsored. Today in most provinces, government-run corporations control all the major gambling enterprises: the lotteries, the bingos and the host of break-open tickets that have become so popular.

Much of the gambling industry in the United States is in private hands. Even so, because it has invaded so many states and communities, Christians are tested as never before about their response to the many gambling opportunities that beckon to them.

Mennonites, both by teaching and from experience, tend to be more careful than many of their neighbors about their material resources. Yet they face most of the temptations that others in society do to become involved in practices that do little to build up and much to break down.

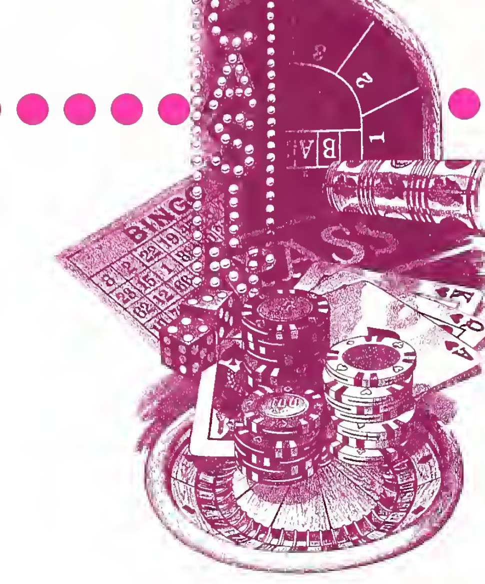
Sadly it was a Mennonite provincial cabinet minister during the '70s who did much to lay the foundation for government-sponsored gambling in Manitoba. And an evangelical church member currently acts as general manager of the Western Canada Lotteries Foundation, which had revenues of over $628 million in 1992-93. Professing Christian faith is no guarantee that we will be able to say no to gambling, either privately or publicly.

In Canada, of the more than $10 billion that is spent annually on gambling, lotteries consume the largest amount by far. Other major categories are horse racing, bingos, casinos and various kinds of raffles, break-open tickets and video lottery terminals.

In the United States, gambling in all its forms generated over $329 billion in revenues in 1992. The signs indicate that despite difficult times for many people, gambling will increase. One report suggests that the gambling craze has caught on so widely and the barriers against gambling have fallen so fully that some 150 casino projects were in the works around North America during the summer of 1993.

What shall we as Christians do with all these invitations to gamble? How shall we respond?

One would like to believe that we could simply say no to it. Let's not participate. And happily, many are able to do exactly that. But the invitation becomes strong for some,



We must question the extent to which governments have become addicted to lotteries and gambling as a way of raising revenues.

and the ability to resist may be weak. For those who are tempted to indulge, the strength to resist may require serious prayer and the support of others in the body of Christ.

We need to understand that lotteries and gambling pose issues for us as followers of Christ, both on a personal and a societal level.

Personal issues: Lotteries and gambling represent a way of seeking riches that doesn't require productive work. That should concern us. Winning in gambling doesn't involve creative activity, genuine work or cooperative effort. The reward is based purely on chance. The Bible gives us no encouragement to live that way.

Gambling also represents an attempt to gain much at the expense of many others. The chances of winning the big prize in the Canadian Lotto 6/49 is about one in 13 or 14 million. Millions must lose so one can make a big win.

Lotteries and gambling should concern us, furthermore, because their fundamental appeal is to a spirit of greed. The manager of Saskatchewan's Super Lotto a few years ago said candidly, "We base all our marketing strategy on greed. It's our big selling point."

Anyone who has seen *Luck*, the magazine of Western Canadian Lotteries Foundation, knows that greed is what keeps people coming back. They hope that if they try a little longer, spend a little more, they will win big and perhaps never need to work again.

In the process some become pathological gamblers. At a conference in Toronto, organized to promote the gambling industry, an Illinois State University criminologist said that studies indicate that 1 to 2 percent of adult Canadians are "probable pathological gamblers."

Furthermore, gambling represents poor stewardship: It uses money for an activity that has no promise of reward, while many legitimate causes go begging. Contrasted with the needs of our families, local church causes, community projects, ministries to the hungry or impoverished, evangelistic ministries, or investment in enterprises that can create work and do good, gambling cannot be considered good stewardship.

In an annual report, the Western Canada Lotteries Foundation indicated that skilled and unskilled laborers and the elderly were the most frequent winners (and, by inference, the most frequent spenders for lotteries). In a *Winnipeg Free Press* article, a Montreal saleswoman described the many people on welfare she sees buying lottery tickets. A California study indicates that poor people spend 2.1 percent of their income on gambling, while the rich spend 0.3 percent of theirs.

Lotteries and gambling are a concern as well because they are addictive. At this point we should note that governments themselves are becoming the most addicted. Because of the huge revenues to be garnered, they've been rushing into many forms of gambling. And they're winning big right now because of the many people who are being drawn into buying the lottery tickets or trying out the new venues.

Some of these are becoming addicts. In Nova Scotia the government began to recognize the extent to which they were luring people into addictive gambling when Wilfred Lanteigne of New Glasgow used a sledgehammer on video lottery terminals (VLTs) in a convenience store out of frustration because his wife was gambling away the family's income there. She could not seem to stop. At that point the government decided to take 2,500 VLTs out of the province's convenience stores and gas stations.

In part, what ought to trouble us about lotteries and various other kinds of gambling is their deception. While they promise fantastic wins, the truth is that only a tiny number ever win more than they lose. The chance of a huge win is infinitesimal. Advertising never stresses the likelihood of losing. Everything conveys the message of winning.

Societal issues: Lotteries and gambling pose issues for us personally, but they also present issues to society as a whole. We must question the extent to which governments have become addicted to lotteries and gambling as a way of raising revenues. The hundreds of millions of dollars they can realize without the "taxpayers" raising a fuss makes it hard for governments to acknowledge the downsides of the gambling craze.

We also need to question the confusion of roles when governments—who ought to function as restraints on activities that cause social harm—become their chief promoters.

It appears that few if any governments are yet willing to acknowledge the negative economic impact of gambling and widespread participation in lotteries. Yet it should be clear that money spent on gambling is money not spent for clothing, food, housing, music lessons, other forms of recreation, concerts—not to mention community projects, church ministries and other good purposes.

The director of an institute on commercial gaming at the University of Nevada told a Toronto audience last year that the economic benefits and jobs touted for casinos "will come at least to some extent at the expense of a loss of jobs and a loss of expenditures in a variety of other activities." Over $10 billion spent gambling in Canada and over $300 billion spent in the United States certainly represents many tens of thousands of jobs lost.

Furthermore, a few people winning big won't spend as wisely and with as much economic benefit as many people spending for the things they truly need or enjoy.

Lotteries and other forms of gambling used to generate revenues for governments must be seen as a regressive form of taxation. For one thing, this is an inefficient tax. Of the total amounts spent on gambling and lotteries in Canada, about 36 to 38 percent comes back to governments as revenue; the rest covers the prizes and administration costs. As a tax, this is highly inefficient.

It is regressive because it hits the poor harder than the wealthy. It can't distinguish among those paying, and a poor person will feel the cost of the gambling more than the wealthy.

A case also can be made that while the poor spend proportionately more for lotteries, it is the middle- and upper-class people who take greater advantage of the sports, cultural and community facilities that lottery revenues are funding.

There are many reasons to reject lotteries and other forms of gambling as a way of raising revenues for good and necessary public causes. And there are certainly many reasons to reject gambling as a personal activity. The way of Christ points in another direction altogether.

The Christian way is to earn our livelihood by productive work. It is to resist the desire for things and instant riches and instead to cultivate a spirit of contentment. It is to love Christ, his kingdom and his work, and to give generously to all that brings honor to the name of Christ. Above all, it is to seek righteousness, godliness, faith and love—and to put our hope in what is eternal.

If we take that way, there will be no need to gamble.

Harold Jantz is the former editor of the Mennonite Brethren Herald *and is the current editor-publisher of* Christian Week, *a national Canadian evangelical newspaper he helped found. He is a member of River East Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg. This article was written for Meetinghouse.*

The Christian way is to earn our livelihood by productive work. It is to resist the desire for things and instant riches and instead to cultivate a spirit of contentment.

3 economic fundamentals of gambling

Earl S. Grinols

1 Gambling transfers dollars from one pocket to another without creating a tangible product. Some people gamble for recreation (such gamblers are presumably provided recreation value for their lost dollars), but many gamblers gamble to acquire money. Instead of creating a product or offering a service to earn their money, this second group of gamblers doesn't accomplish anything and yet expects to acquire money. The more people there are who gamble to acquire money, the poorer society is. If everyone gambled to acquire money, we would all starve.

2 Unlike most forms of commerce, gambling entails direct economic costs to taxpayers and society, including nongamblers. About 1.5 to 4 percent of the population will suffer from gambling addiction; 23 percent of gambling addicts are eventually charged with crime, and 10 percent are incarcerated (another 10 percent are placed on probation only). Incarceration costs per person are on the order of $25,000 per year (up to $50,000 if the offender is not young and healthy). Gambling addiction also leads to direct costs in the form of lost jobs and lost output. Lower output means lower tax revenue to the state and increased social service costs to nongambling taxpayers.

3 With the obvious pressure of social costs, gambling promoters argue that they create jobs. This is sometimes possible, as in the case of an Atlantic City or Las Vegas, where the area has effectively converted itself into one large casino that serves primarily tourists. In general, however, gambling loses area jobs when local gambler dollars are removed from the area and spent by a casino outside the area. Gambling creates area jobs when outside gambler dollars are spent locally by a casino. Communities lose net jobs when the first flow is larger than the second. A full accounting of dollar flows, therefore, is needed to determine if gambling will create more jobs than it will lose.

Earl S. Grinols is professor of economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Reprinted with permission from Christian Social Action, *July/August 1994.*

Economic development plan: *Inside the Dakota Sioux casino, operated by the Sisseton-Wapheton tribe*

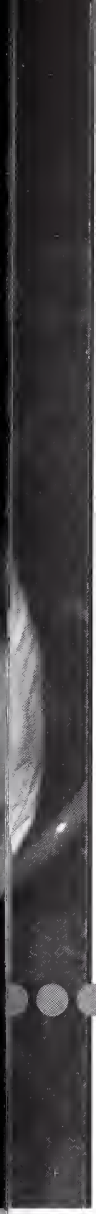
A Mennonite pastor considers the economic benefits and social hazards of a casino on a Choctaw reservation.

The longest quarter mile in Mississippi

Larry Penner

The longest quarter mile in Mississippi can be found near Philadelphia on the Choctaw Indian Reservation. That quarter mile separates the Pearl River Mennonite Church, a Choctaw congregation, and the newly built Silver Star Hotel and Casino, owned by the Choctaw Nation.

Glenn Myers, pastor of the church, says most of his congregation opposed the casino. But when put to a vote, the



Rick Gerharter (Impact Visuals)

For people who have struggled for years against government policy that has meant Native American poverty, taking advantage of Native Americans' separate nation status can mean equalizing the playing field and reclaiming their due.

tribe overwhelmingly supported building the casino and claiming their share of an over $4 billion industry: Native American-owned gambling.

Kim Winstead, marketing manager for the casino and a life-long Southern Baptist, believes the casino will better the community. While she recognizes some people take gambling to excess, she cites the more than 1,000 jobs the casino has brought to the community, and efforts like the United Way fundraiser recently held among casino staff, as examples of the casino's positive impact. And she says the increased traffic the casino has brought to Philadelphia, Miss., has brought new consumers to local businesses.

Myers says he has not seen any weekend casino goers visit his church, and he hasn't bothered to visit the casino, either. "I get kind of ill every time I go by there," he says.

Still, Myers admits, the casino has brought needed money to the Choctaw community. As a teacher at the Philadelphia high school, Myers will benefit from the $70,000 the tribe promised toward a new science lab. "It makes you wonder what attitude you should take," Myers says. "If the money's going somewhere, I'd rather see a school get the money."

The 24-hour casino, which employs more than 1,000 people, is the latest step in the tribe's economic development plan that since the 1980s has changed an 80 percent unemployment rate into an 80 percent employment rate. Tribe-owned industry, including auto-parts factories, a greeting-card operation and a direct-mailing center, generate over $60 million in annual sales.

For people who have struggled for years against government policy that has meant Native American poverty, taking advantage of Native Americans' separate nation status can mean equalizing the playing field and reclaiming their due. Because the Choctaw are not bound by Mississippi laws restricting casino gambling, they are reaping a profit off-bounds to non-Native investors.

Myers acknowledges there is some sense of justice in Native Americans benefiting from the system. "The white man has taken away [from Native Americans] for so long. They are finally getting back from the white man. That's one good side. The bad side is that wherever there's money, there's corruption. I don't see the money making tribal officials better people."

Casinos are not the first option for profit raised by separate nation status. According to Myers, the tribe recently pursued the possibility of buying land in nearby Noxubee County to open a hazardous waste site. A company even offered to donate the land to the tribe. If tribe-owned, the site would be free from state and environmental safety regulations. The plan for the waste site fell through, but not before raising questions in peoples' minds whether casino gambling was a better option.

Today the casino's business is booming. Expansions are planned both in hotel space and gaming space. Payback is ahead of schedule. And with about 70 percent of the casino's profits going directly to the tribe, there is solid support in the community.

But Myers sees the possibility of the tide changing. He says businessmen he knows in Meridian, 40 miles away, have seen customers spending less since the casino opened and speculates the money that used to be spent in local business is going into the games. He heard a story in the local bank of a man losing $70,000 in one night. A security worker told him about finding children left in a car while the parents were inside playing the games.

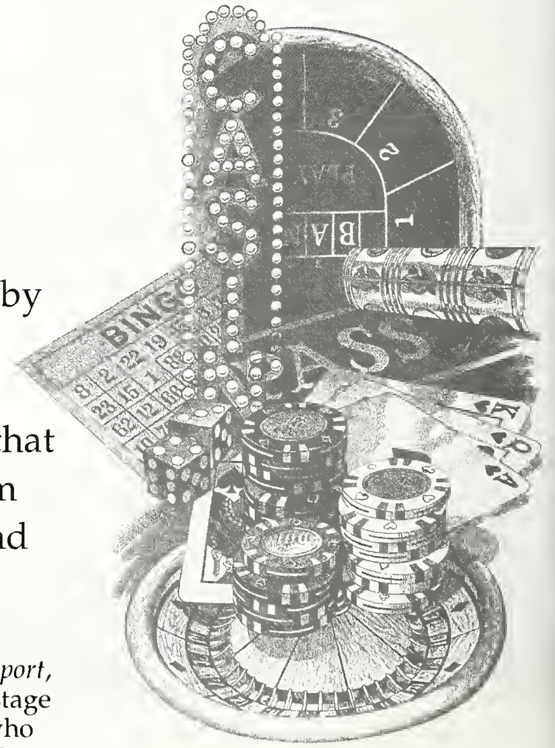
Whether the Silver Star will make or break its community is an open question. But it seems clear that, for now, it won't go away.

Larry Penner is assistant editor of The Mennonite.

Courting the lucky dollar

What happens when a community decides to gamble for economic growth?

Rich Minder



Cities are looking for a quick buck. Distressed by the loss of high-paying manufacturing jobs, Pittsburgh's policymakers grab at economic development opportunities. Riverboat casinos, some that can hold as many as 3,000 guests, appeal to Mayor Tom Murphy because they promise to attract investment and provide needed jobs.

To shortsighted planners, gambling promises to meet immediate economic need. A survey conducted by a large casino operator showed 58 percent of Pittsburgh's South Side residents favor legalized riverboat gambling. They see the potential expansion of the gambling market. What they do not see is the contraction around the corner.

Pittsburgh is now in the first phase of the gambling game. Places race to get in on the ground floor. Localities strive to maximize profit before every hamlet and Indian reservation floods the gambling market.

If and when a casino opens, the South Side will have entered phase two. The first business casualties will be illegal numbers operators and their mom-and-pop store hosts. Participation will dwindle at church bingo night. Next, business community diversity will disintegrate as big gambling operators suck disposable income out of residents. In Atlantic City, during this stage, the number of local restaurants dropped from around 250 to 100 (*U.S. News and World Report*, March 14, 1994). Business in this stage only booms for casino operators who bring in low-paying service jobs. Many of those who lose their jobs during closure of community businesses miss these opportunities. According to *U.S. News and World Report*, of Atlantic City's 46,000 casino workers, only 10,000 are locals. The community must learn to compete with the casino. Community support of local business is essential during this phase.

Soon a new phase will take shape. Gambling will provide opportunities to four dependent industries: currency exchanges, pawn shops, used-car dealers and social services, including churches. Addictive gambling will support the games long after the novelty of pulling a lever wears off. Some casino operators, by contributing to institutions such as Gamblers Anonymous, will divert attention away from the need for productive investments. The community must then learn to invest in its own productivity and learn to compete against parasitic businesses that prey on dependence.

Community support of local business is essential in order to compete with casinos.

Simply opposing the introduction of gambling is insufficient over the long run. Doing so draws our attention away from the need for public investment in productive business.

Rich Minder completed a master's degree in urban and regional planning at the University of Pittsburgh in May.

How to fight the Las Vegas looters

How a minister and a small town stopped a proposal for a riverboat casino

Jim Reed

The Las Vegas gaming industry executives had a sure thing in picturesque and historic Galena, Ill. Political and business interests eagerly clutched their proposal for a riverboat casino docked next to the downtown of this tourist-centered northwest Illinois town. They expected smooth sailing amid the whirr of the slot machines and the click of chips at the blackjack tables. Except they didn't figure on the ordinary folk of Galena, and they didn't figure on Tom Grey.

Tom had served churches in the Chicago area, then found himself assigned to "downstate" Galena's United Methodist Church. When people came to him concerned about what big-stakes gambling was going to do to the culture of their town, Tom led them in a media blitz and political trek that threw out the town council members who had voted the boat in. The funds that had been promised by the council for docking-facility construction and other amenities were denied. But they were too late to sink the ship.

Recognizing that much of the political and financial clout was coming out of Chicago, Tom contacted friends there. They worked under the slogan "Enough Is Enough." Chicago's Mayor Richard Daley had worked to get a multimillion-dollar "gift" casino for the city. Suburban town movers were vying for additional riverboat licenses being made available by the state, some places proposing to dig a ditch to float the boat. It became clear that the Las Vegas looters were everywhere, carrying bundles of cash and promises of economic salvation to hard-pressed communities.

Tom's group discovered these tactics:

- that churches form a network across the state and that their members are together each Sunday;
- that clergy support is useful, but the key to success is the laity;
- that attainable goals are essential (For example, the group decided only to stop further proliferation of legalized gambling.);
- that while moral and ethical issues are critical, the focus is on the destructive economic ("no product") and social ("no value") issues (The media want to contain the church in the moral/ethical closet.);
- that a call for referendums before the introduction of new legalized gambling at any level can create a roadblock. (Poll after poll has demonstrated that a significant majority of people does not want more gambling —even if they themselves gamble. The "not in my backyard" bias is strong.)

Fun: Local church people initiated organizing in towns and counties. Task forces were created to work on state legislators and the governor. Tom's group learned that church folk are familiar with organizing for church events, and organizing to stop gambling proliferation utilized skills they already had. What's more, it turned out to be fun.

Residents influenced their town councils to promise a referendum before gambling could even be considered. Chicago gave up on the land-based casino-theme park scheme with the promise of five flat-boat casinos on the Chicago River. So far that has been stopped in the legislature twice.

In some places workers failed to put pressure on their state legislators, often not even knowing who their legislators were. Successful workers found that legislators almost never hear from anyone but lobbyists, that a dozen phone calls, visits or letters were often enough to get a commitment or change a mind.

They discovered that citizens with a good issue, a little money for postage, gas and telephone, and the willingness to put in some time with neighbors and elected officials, can be successful.

The Las Vegas looters are not gamblers. They know exactly the percent of profit on their slots and tables, a no-risk enterprise. Now, when they find organized, committed, grass-roots opposition, they have second thoughts. And with all their money and all their cocky know-how, they make big mistakes. Several months ago in Missouri, they got an election scheduled to change the Missouri constitution to allow slot machines on their riverboats. They failed to note that their chosen date was two days after Easter Sunday. The word was passed to the bursting congregations. The constitution was not amended.

We don't need to take this Las Vegas flimflam. We can get involved and we can make a difference. And when we do, the gambling promoters will discover that their no-risk, sure-thing investment has evaporated.

Jim Reed is a United Methodist minister in Chicago.

An ecumenical venture called the **National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling** is being developed. The contact person and national spokesperson is the same Tom Grey who began his fight in Galena. The office phone is (312) 380-5060, ext. 241.

Letters

A GOOD FRIEND

I so enjoy reading *The Mennonite* when it arrives. I feel a good friend comes. I make myself a cup of coffee and start reading. Keep up the good work. *Henny Vanderzwaag, Upland, Calif.*

ENTERTAINING AN ANGEL

Occasionally we have guests in our home who visit with such softness, gentleness and love that when they quietly leave we are left wondering if we have been entertaining an angel. Such was our experience recently when [General Conference Mennonite Church mission worker] Jonathan Larson was a guest in our home. We thank God for Jonathan and for the relationship our conference has established with the African Independent Churches. *Dave and Nancy Waldowski, Sioux Falls, S.D.*

OVERPOPULATION

Your Oct. 11 issue dealt with caring for the environment. People often don't seem to draw the correlation between population growth and environmental degradation. Here in the United States, our population expands by 3 million people annually, causing ever increasing demands for housing, roads, water, land, landfill sites and more.

World Population Awareness Week, Oct. 23-29, followed the most successful population conference in world history, the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo. Now it is up to each of us to bring the carefully crafted Cairo *Programme of Action* to life.

World population reached an unprecedented 5.7 billion in 1994. While growth rates are declining, the United Nations projects that unless we implement the Cairo Program, world population will continue to increase to 8.5 billion by 2025.

Much can be done to redirect our present collision course with the natural environment. As individuals we can change our decisions about consumption and reproduction. As local communities we can work together to improve the health of our cities and towns. We can develop policies that encourage sustainability and we can recognize the interdependence of all countries, particularly concerning population and environmental issues.

In a world of limited resources, stabilizing population is crucial. The quality of life for present and future generations depends on it. *Mary Beth Janzen, Reedley, Calif.*

CHEMICALS AND PLASTICS

"The Earth Needs Friends in the Church" by David Ortman (Oct. 11 issue, page 3) and "12 Resolutions to Help the Earth" (page 7) both have significant contributions to make in helping all of us think about how we affect the environment and what we can do to decrease our impact on it. However, there are several misconceptions. The most important is the term "chemical-free." A second is that plastics are bad.

Only a total vacuum is "chemical-free." Vinegar and baking soda are chemical cleaners. Liquid dish detergent is a manufactured mixture of chemicals. Eucalyptus, rosemary and brewer's yeast are organic mixtures.

Even our bodies are major chemical factories. They require chemicals (food, water and oxygen) to produce energy by converting food via chemical reactions. Two by-products of these reactions are carbon dioxide (which contributes to global warming) and water. In addition, there are portions of chemicals the body takes in or manufactures and can't use that are discharged as waste. Perhaps if we ate less there would be less human waste.

Plastics are used in so many places in our lives that I can't begin to name all of them. In the PVC industry alone there are thousands including electrical wire coatings, house siding and windows, doctors' and dentists' gloves, baby pacifiers and toys, blood bags, tracheotomy tubes, automobile body side molding, window guides, dashboard coatings, tamperproof packaging (brought about by tragedy) and floor coverings. Styrofoam, no longer foamed using old CFC technology, is used to make our refrigerators and freezers more efficient. Other kinds of plastic are used in many other applications.

Let us not throw out the baby with the bath. Plastics are replacing hard to get wood. In many applications plastics are more efficient and longer lasting than the materials they replace.

If we choose wisely and reuse what we have, as we do when a commodity is scarce, we will be kinder to our planet. *Janet Voth, PVC chemist, Charlotte, N.C.*

ON BEING A PASTOR'S WIFE

After having read and reread the anonymous writer's advice on how to support your pastor (Sept. 27 issue, page 6), I can't help but respond.

My heart goes out to her as she wonders whether they will make their 29th anniversary together.

I gather that she is a very unhappy, lonely person, shoved into a role she truly dislikes. I can see her husband very involved in the things of the church, enjoying the people while she is missing out on it because she does not have enough of his time.

After 28 years of marriage she might consider giving up her job and join him in meaningful visitations and other encounters. He is probably provided with the "equitable salary" most pastors are by now.

"The friends with whom you can share your life deeply and openly" won't be there for you if they are asked to phone the pastor's home *only* in emergency or to his office.

I have been both a missionary and pastor's wife for many years. Working together as a team has been a most rewarding experience. I recommend the same. Enjoy the Lord. Enjoy your church family. It's a great calling. *Martha Janzen, Calgary*

Ideas your church can try

Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., distributed a questionnaire to the congregation about people's wishes regarding the church's continuing growth and plans for the future. The questionnaire asked for feelings about church growth and listed options the church might try in order to grow.

Fiscal health

What's wrong with gambling?

Why individuals and churches should stop their involvement in gambling

J.B. Miller

When I was 10 years old, I played marbles for keeps, until my mother found out about it. My mother explained that playing marbles for keeps was too much like gambling. "Well, what's wrong with gambling?" I asked. "It's wrong," she said. End of discussion. So I grew up being taught that gambling was wrong. No one explained to me what was wrong about it; it just was wrong.

I went off to college (a Mennonite college) and learned to play poker. I loved it. I was pretty good—so good, in fact, that I wasn't asking my parents for as much money anymore. They, of course, never knew why. But over the years, gambling has always bothered me. Whether it was losing $40 at the slot machines in Monte Carlo or $100 to buy a chance to win a $150,000 house, I've never been comfortable with it. Increasingly, however, it seems acceptable for church organizations and congregations to sponsor gambling activities. While Mennonite churches may not be sponsoring bingo halls yet, activities that parallel bingo are being introduced as fund-raisers. Church organizations and congregations are selling raffle tickets from $1 to $100, with the winners receiving everything from quilts to houses. Few voices are being raised to question the activity, and those who do are seen as "out of touch."

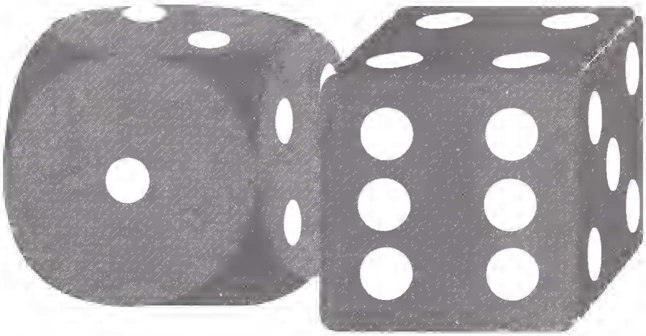
What then is wrong with gambling, buying lottery tickets, raffle chances, or going to Las Vegas for a gambling junket? Gambling of any kind is poor stewardship, and the end use of the funds is never justification for me being a poor steward. I find it difficult to know where to draw the line between good gambling and bad gambling, as some people have.

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Some people think that if the end benefactor is a charity, then gambling is permissible. In my view, even this is not justified. Parents cannot teach their children about what's wrong with slot machines, lottery tickets and blackjack tables if they themselves are buying raffle tickets to support some worthy cause.

What's wrong with gambling? Here are some of my answers:

1. It's a terrible use of resources that have been entrusted to us by God. "Oh, but I might win, and then I can give all this money to charity," you say. The chances of winning any major prize are miniscule, to the point of being ridiculous. The odds of winning at Powerball, a national lottery, are 1 in 54,979,155. Lotteries where only five numbers need to be correctly picked out of 48 choices have odds of 1 in 12,271,512. In the parable of the talents, the master was upset when one servant returned with the principal intact. Think of what would have happened if the servant had returned with raffle ticket stubs with those kind of odds.



2. The people who can least afford to buy lottery tickets are the major purchasers. Studies have shown that lower-income households spend money on lottery tickets at a higher percentage of their income than do other households. In an attempt to escape poverty, these people often purchase lottery tickets hoping to strike it rich. In the process they often spend money on the lottery that would be better used for food and other necessities.

3. For some, gambling can become addictive. Most of us have never directly witnessed the worst side of gambling, but the reality remains that for some, gambling becomes addictive, robbing people of their ability to make good decisions. As a result people spend money on gambling when it should be going for necessities.

Occasionally I hear people say, "I'll buy a raffle ticket for a quilt and look on it as a donation," attempting to justify what they are doing. Either the organization selling the raffle ticket is worth your support outside of a chance to win something, or you should be supporting some other cause. The fact remains that churches will stop doing raffles when we stop buying tickets. I can see the headlines of 2010: "Integrated Mennonite Church Convention to Be Held in Las Vegas: Winnings to Support Foreign Missions."

Parents cannot teach their children about what's wrong with slot machines, lottery tickets and blackjack tables if they themselves are buying raffle tickets to support some worthy cause.

By the way, for those of you who believe that investing money in the stock or bond market is gambling, I don't agree. But I'll cover that topic in another column.

Church and world

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Bernie Wiebe teaches conflict resolution at Menno Simons College in Winnipeg and serves as vice moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

The Irish are 'hot'

They are passionate, not lukewarm, about morals.

Bernie Wiebe

I am in Dublin, Ireland, on a study leave from Menno Simons College in Winnipeg, studying at the Peace Institute of the Irish School of Ecumenics, affiliated with Trinity College. Because I teach conflict resolution studies at MSC, my hope is to learn more about European perspectives on peacemaking, especially from the context of a country dominated by conflict for so long.

A Bible reading from one of my first nights here has seemed appropriate for some of the more public things I observed early on. "I wish that you were either cold or hot ... because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15b-16).

It has been a strong first impression for me in Ireland that people here are not "lukewarm." They are serious ("hot") about their politics and about their religion. (My first two Sundays visiting two different churches actually felt "too serious" for me.)

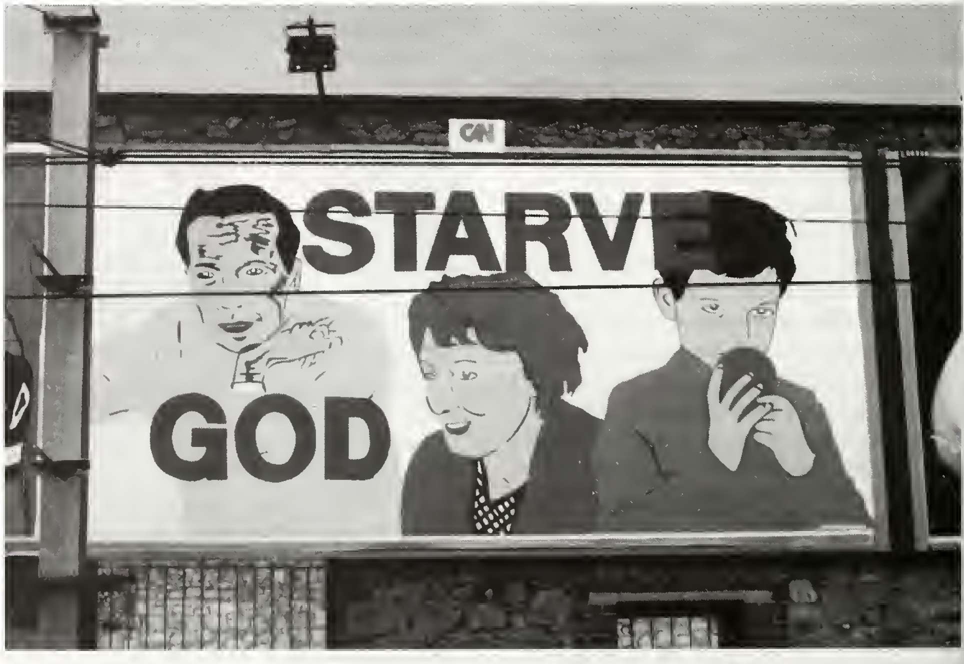
People here are passionate. They believe in values, many to the point of seeing their own values as absolute. The troublesome wing of the Irish Republic Army is known as Sinn Fein (pronounced "shin fain"), which means "Ourselves Alone".

Two very different events illustrate my observations.

Gerry Adams' visit to America: When I arrived in Dublin toward the end of September, the media were all preoccupied with Gerry Adams going to the United States. Adams is head of Sinn Fein, the militant wing of the IRA, known for trying to build an Ireland independent of Britain—by force if necessary. We know about the decades of bloodshed that have pitted Irish against Irish, also kin against kin and Christian against Christian—especially Protestant vs. Catholic.

In August the IRA declared a cease-fire. It surprised the world. Of course, with only one superpower in today's global affairs, it is common to court American support as soon as possible. The Sinn Fein wasted no time; Gerry Adams was off to America to rally support for IRA causes.

This Sinn Fein move confounded the Irish and the British. Columnist Maurice Manning (London *Evening Herald*, Sept. 26) said the picture of Gerry Adams as an apostle of peace simply turned his stomach. United Kingdom Prime Minister John Major became so uneasy at Gerry Adams' kindly reception in America that he sent Michael Mates, former minister for Northern Ireland Security, to the United States to counter Adams' influence.



Bernie Wiebe

'Human inhumanity': *The controversial signs were promoting an art exhibit.*

Northern Ireland sent Ulster Unionist Member of Parliament Ken Maginnis, who faced Gerry Adams on "Larry King Live."

People east of the Atlantic rejoiced that the White House refused an audience to Adams. However, when he was given a meeting with members of the U.S. Congress, the popular *Irish Independent* declared this "a clear success for the Sinn Fein" (Oct. 6).

Now that Adams is back in Ireland, the media keep on debating when the cease-fire should be acknowledged by staging official talks between the IRA and John Major. One extreme says this must not happen before the Sinn Fein promises the cease-fire to be permanent regardless of what else happens in future. Others say that any olive branch should be seized immediately and cultivated.

Billboards on the street: As I rode the DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) my first days here, numerous billboards grabbed my attention with their striking messages: "Kill God. Blast God. Starve God. Execute God." I wondered whether they heralded a new spiritual movement.

A while later it became clear what was going on. The media had been inundated with complaints. Many of the signs were now defaced to remove direct references to God.

The explanation was that these posters were promoting a Dublin Museum of Modern Art exhibit on "the human inhumanity." Since they did not violate the city's advertising code, the city council said it could do nothing. Obviously, the public didn't wait for any new bylaws. The signs disappeared almost overnight.

What about us? I see hope in Ireland because the people are "hot," they are passionate. They act.

Relativism, a moral meltdown, a decline or even demise of any ethical concerns, plagues much of our society and our churches. We find it very difficult to stem that tide. There is little clear direction or action.

Is it because too many have become lukewarm? Are we afraid of passion?

I believe there is hope in our countries and our churches as we become passionately filled with God's Holy Spirit. It will move us forward.

A pastor's prayer

David Orr

Lord, I sit in a room of ideas,
reading shelves of books,
pages of wisdom.

I live in a world of information,
radios pouring out speech,
televisions spilling images.

My mind adds word to words,
forming phrases and shading meanings,
leaping from thought to thought.

But Lord, yours are the only ideas that matter.
You have all the information I need.
Your Word stands above all my words.

Come into my room.
Step into my world.
Move into my mind.

Fill my thoughts with your thoughts.
Let me hear your good news and see your salvation.
Make my ideas reflect your wisdom.

Let me proclaim your message, O my God.

David Orr is pastor at Friendship Mennonite Church in Bedford Heights, Ohio.

Bible

The victim of gambling

From Eden on we are called to work and care for others.

Stephen Mott

Gambling is an issue on which the Bible has little to say directly or explicitly; yet biblical values are critically pertinent to it. One cannot simply copy down biblical statements to respond adequately to every contemporary problem. Instead, many questions must be analyzed in terms of more general biblical principles and themes.

For a biblical stance on gambling we should not try to find biblical verses that seem to come close to something like gambling, e.g., the soldiers below the cross casting lots for Jesus' garments. Such literalism misses the more penetrating biblical thrust.

Gambling is a substitute for labor. It seeks an increase in financial resources by risking them to chance. In fact, the more successful it is, the more perilous it is. Hard work is then increasingly difficult emotionally. The biblical response to gambling thus must include the biblical theology of work, the path that gambling undercuts.

Work, unlike gambling, accomplishes something in one's environment. Work was already present in Eden. God put the newly created human being in the garden of Eden "to till it and keep it" (Genesis 2:15). The purpose of work is basic to being human, to being alive, to being a special creation of God. One works to serve God by care of the rest of the world.

According to Goran Agrell's *Toil and Substance* (1976), Adam and Eve did not work for sustenance. Independent of toil, they received this from God through the trees of the Garden. Any activity, such as gambling, that undercuts or replaces work undermines what is essential to being human.

After the fall into sin ended the Edenic bliss, the human being still has the creational mandate to serve God by caring for the creation. Now he or she must also work for sustenance. "By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread" (Genesis 3:19). Activity that undercuts work now not only surrenders a purpose of human life, it also threatens the economic existence of oneself or dependents or others.

With the in-breaking of God's reign with Jesus, there is an anticipation of the renewal of the original role of labor in Eden, Agrell suggests. The disciples serve God with tasks that do not provide them with sustenance. They depend directly on God for that. They are sent off without bread or money (Mark 6:8). They are not to care about food or clothing (Matthew 6:25).

This new age is only partially here, however. The continuing of the present age means that social responsibilities, including care of oneself and dependents, continue (Luke 22:36).

Against those who would claim only the privileges of the new, Paul and other early church teachers had to remind them of God's ongoing commandments, which were violated by the new libertine attitude. Instead of stealing, they are to work with their hands "so that they may be able to share with someone who has need" (Ephesians 4:28; cf. Lev. 19:9-11). Instead of coveting others' goods, by toiling with their hands they "must come to the aid of the weak" (Acts 20:33-35).

A new emphasis appears. The purpose of work is to support the needy in the community. This also is undercut in gambling, as it withdraws resources and efforts that should be flowing to the care of the poor.

Stephen Charles Mott is professor of Christian social ethics at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Mass. Reprinted with permission from Christian Social Action, *July/August 1994.*

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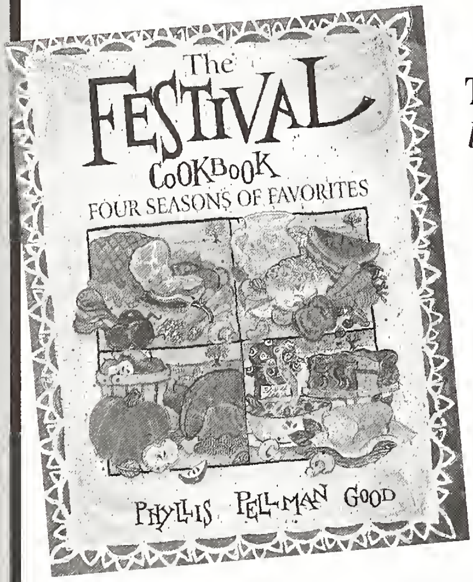

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by Phyllis Pellman Good

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Mennonite Foods and Folkways from South Russia, Volume 1

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Mennonite Foods and Folkways from South Russia, Volume I explores the abundant food tradition which developed when Mennonites from eastern Europe settled in Russia. This thoroughly researched collection of recipes is laced with memories from these people and their North American descendants, many of whom maintain the food tradition. A wonderful cookbook and foodbook, rich with stories and more that 500 recipes.

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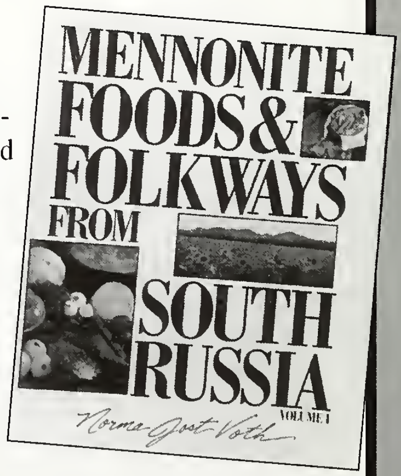

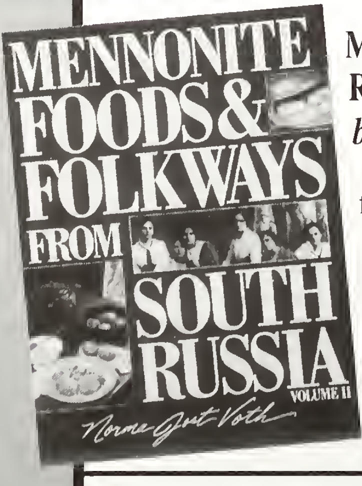

Mennonite Foods and Folkways from South Russia, Vol. II

by Norma Jost Voth

The Mennonites of Russia had a particular story and history, as well as a particular food tradition. Norma Jost Voth interviewed persons whose lives have spanned from Chortitza in South Russia to Newton, Kansas, from the Molotschna to Winnipeg, Manitoba. Their memories of orchards and gardens, Faspa and weddings, food preservation and wheat harvest fill this volume. In addition, there are more than 100 recipes (different from those in Volume I), as well as typical menus and menus for special occasions.

"Meticulously researched chronicle of the Russian Mennonites." —Publishers Weekly

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Seminary president dies of heart attack

Goshen, Ind. (AMBS)—"Grant us wisdom, grant us courage," a congregation of almost 1,000 sang at a memorial service for Marlin E. Miller, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Miller, 55, died unexpectedly of a heart attack in his home on Thursday, Nov. 3. The memorial service was held Monday, Nov. 7, at College Mennonite Church in Goshen.

Howard Zehr

Miller

Miller was serving as the first joint president of AMBS, beginning in that role July 1, 1990. Prior to that he had served as president of Goshen Biblical Seminary from 1975 to 1990. Gayle Gerber Koontz, AMBS dean, will serve as acting president while arrangements are made to search for an interim president.

"We give thanks for the gift that Marlin has been and has given to the seminary and the church. We mourn what is lost and remains unfinished," Koontz said at the memorial service. She echoed the comments of many when she described how Miller "reached out across dividing walls," walls between different theological views in the church, between the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church, between Mennonites in Canada and in the United States, between students and faculty, between the Mennonite business community and the seminary, and between the community of theological education and the church.

Among the many accomplishments of Miller's 20-year tenure with AMBS was the culmination of the joining of Goshen Biblical Seminary (GBS) and Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Although the two seminaries began their association in 1958 and had shared the campus at 3003 Benham Avenue since 1969, the incorporation of AMBS as one seminary was completed in 1993.

In addition to his leadership roles at AMBS, Miller served in other leadership positions in the Mennonite church and other religious organizations. He served on several committees and projects with Mennonite Central Committee, and from 1986 until the present was co-chair of the Inter-Mennonite Confession of Faith Committee. Miller also served on the executive committee of the Association for Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. A book he edited, *The Church's Peace Witness*, was released by Eerdmans this month.

Miller was married to Ruthann Gardner on June 12, 1960. He is survived by Ruthann; two daughters and their spouses: Randy and Rachel Miller Jacobs of Goshen; Tim and Lynelle Miller Clark of Granger, Ind.; one son and his wife, Eric and Lisa Miller Sommers of Lamoine, Maine, and seven grandchildren. He was a member of Belmont Mennonite Church in Elkhart.

Miller was born Nov. 29, 1938, in Iowa City, Iowa. Later his family moved to Goshen, Ind., where he attended Bethany Christian High School. After graduating from Goshen College in 1960 and attending GBS one year, Miller and Ruthann moved to Europe, where he pursued graduate studies. He received a doctoral degree in theology from the University of Heidelberg (Germany), graduating summa cum laude.

From 1968 to 1974 he served with Mennonite Board of Missions in Paris. He was ordained to pastoral ministry in 1971 in the Chatenay-Malabry congregation near Paris.

People wishing to give memorial gifts may send contributions to AMBS for the Leadership Award, a scholarship program for students exhibiting gifts for church leadership. *Mary E. Klassen*

Inside the news

Mennonites help Rwandan refugees cope / p. 16

MEDA gets green light in Haiti / p. 18

Christian Peacemaker Teams critiques U.S. action in Haiti / p. 18

Eastern Canada conference tackles structural issues / p. 19

Mennonite Central Committee has reopened an office in Beirut, Lebanon, after an eight-year absence, during which time MCC's work in Lebanon was directed from Jordan and Cyprus. Joan Barkman, a member of the Aberdeen Evangelical Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, arrived in Beirut in October to reopen the office and direct MCC's work in Lebanon. MCC closed its office in 1986 due to the civil war in that country.

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Mennonite Board of Missions Voluntary Service has withdrawn from AmeriCorps, the new U.S. national service program. Although a proposal submitted by the Washington service unit was accepted for the program, policy and time constraints prevented full participation for the program year, which began in September. The AmeriCorps grant to the Washington service unit would have provided $185,140 per year for the next three years, plus $94,500 per year in educational awards. Steve Martin Ramer and Scott Neufeld-Wall, MBM VS local program coordinators in Washington, submitted a proposal for new programming in June. They were surprised when the national service commission accepted their proposal as the first AmeriCorps program in Washington. However, as they worked together with AmeriCorps and MBM leaders, it became clear that federal regulations could conflict with some of MBM's policies and theological principles. MBM will continue to consider options for relating to AmeriCorps.

The Canadian International Development Agency calls Mennonite Economic Development Associates an "effective development organization ... [that is] too modest in reporting its accomplishments." The CIDA study was part of a regular review of associations it supports. The report called MEDA "a good investment for Canadian taxpayers."

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Two new relief sales in Didsbury, Alta., and Winnipeg joined eight others in Canada to raise $1.2 million for Mennonite Central Committee in 1994. The Winnipeg sale raised $56,000, the Didsbury sale $100,000. The Saskatoon and Central Fraser Valley sales celebrated their 25th anniversaries. The Central Fraser Valley sale, held in Clearbrook, B.C., raised the largest sum: $294,820.

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The Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo (Ont.) has publicly criticized the procedures and policies at Conrad Grebel College that led to the elimination of a faculty position. Leonard Friesen received word in late February that his contract would not be renewed on June 30, 1995. The association report says that during Friesen's first term the college "threatened his academic freedom and the security of his employment, violating its own policies and procedures." The report claims the college used a "defective and flawed process to isolate professor Friesen alone for termination." Ernie Regehr, interim president at Conrad Grebel, emphasizes that the report was issued not by the university but by the faculty association. "This is not to discredit these views," he says, "but to recognize that they grow out of a very particular set of interests." In a response to the call for a public apology, Regehr wrote, "The college must be fully open to recognizing and taking responsibility for its failures.... We are also exploring ways ... [to] honor Friesen's significant contributions to the life and work of Conrad Grebel College." *(Mennonite Reporter)*

Mennonites help traumatized Rwandans grieve

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—A Tanzanian pastor found Rwandan teenager Augustine Munyeshaka wandering, dazed and alone, near the Rwandan refugee camps in northwestern Tanzania. He, his parents and two sisters had fled Rwanda together. He was the only one to survive the trip.

Dr. A. Richard and Ruth Weaver of Ephrata, Pa., recently returned from a six-week Mennonite Central Committee assignment spent ministering to Rwandan refugees, like Augustine, who suffered traumatic losses during their country's civil war.

The Weavers, members of Ephrata Mennonite Church, also met with and encouraged Rwandan church leaders in Kenya and Tanzania.

As many as 1 million may have died in the latest cycle of violence between Hutu and Tutsi people that has racked Rwanda since April. Several million Rwandans fled to neighboring countries, where many now live in squalid refugee camps.

Every refugee has a painful story to tell, report the Weavers. People have seen friends, neighbors and family members murdered. Some also participated in killings.

"People faced horrendous moral dilemmas," says Ruth. For example, Hutu soldiers forced a Hutu man to kill his Tutsi brother-in-law, whom they had badly mutilated. This Hutu man, now a refugee, is caring for the dead man's children.

The refugees are dealing with their trauma in different ways. Some are in denial, unable to accept what happened. Some appear dazed; many suffer nightmares. Some are tormented by guilt over their role in killings. Some, especially church leaders, feel they must be strong to minister to others. Some have "survivor's guilt," wondering why they are alive when so many have died. Others, like a woman who doesn't know where her two daughters are, don't know whether to hope or grieve.

"Grief work appears to be a monumental task. People are reluctant or unable to share their feelings or cry," observes Ruth. "Maybe they don't feel safe to grieve. If they begin to grieve this immense tragedy, where will they stop? Can they stop?"

Mark Will (MCC)

A. Richard and Ruth Weaver

"Whether people are killers or victims, in God's sight they are all suffering spiritually; both need healing; both need our help," says Richard.

The Weavers are particularly concerned about the children. "Thousands of impressionable children have witnessed brutal murders. This kind of trauma will require healing ministries for generations," says Richard.

As Richard and Ruth met with groups of refugees, they felt inadequate to address people's deep spiritual needs and relied heavily on Scripture and prayer.

At one church service, Richard preached from the laments in Psalms. Later a Methodist pastor said it helped him to hear that it is all right to mourn and to stay in that stage as long as necessary. "God understands the cries of our hearts," Richard often stressed to the refugees.

During a meeting with refugee women, Ruth asked what they had lost. The women listed family, children, spouses, friends, belongings and customs, such as burying the dead and grieving in traditional ways. Many also mentioned that as refugees they have lost their sense of place.

"Yet in the midst of all this loss, these women are choosing to build new lives and nurturing their children under conditions difficult to imagine," says Ruth. Together Ruth and the refugee women discussed Jesus' promise to prepare an eternal place for all his followers.

Nearly all the refugees are Hutu, the group accused of committing most of the recent atrocities. Hutu people feel a deep sense of collective shame, even if they themselves did not participate in the killings. "Your ethnic identity is part of who you are," explains Ruth. "I tried to imagine how I would feel in their place.

"The difference between guilt and shame became very apparent in this context. The people we were relating to may not have felt any guilt for what they did, but they carried shame for who they are. They feel deeply the taint of being Hutu and of the involvement of their people in this tragedy.

"We began to reflect on the death of Jesus with them. Crucifixion was a shameful way to die. Jesus was willing to suffer both our guilt and our shame to free us."

The Hutu refugees also told the Weavers that they feel misunderstood by the international community, saying that the latest massacres followed a long history of conflict that included oppression by the Tutsis.

"We tend to believe that the bloodshed on both sides was extensive and that both groups have much to confess and much to forgive. Reconciliation will be a long, slow process, but it will have a greater chance if it can begin with the church," report the Weavers.

As the Weavers spoke at church services and visited with refugees, they felt honored to be representing North American Mennonites. More than once, Rwandan pastors expressed appreciation, saying that although the international community had come with food and other material aid, Mennonites were the first to come as visitors specifically to share spiritually with them.

"It was a privilege to say, 'We care and are praying with you for healing and restoration of peace for your people and your nation,'" say the Weavers. *Pearl Sensenig*

'The women of Africa are strong'

Don Edkins (WCC)

Ruth Weaver writes that when she got to Benaco refugee camp in Zaire, some refugees were also arriving, carrying all they had. One woman balanced a load of household goods on her head. A toddler was riding on her shoulders and a baby was tied to her back. Three or four other small children walked with her, each with loads on their heads, except for the smallest boy. As he stumbled along, his mother grasped his shirt collar to support and encourage him to keep walking.

Jessica Mkuchu, a Tanzanian colleague, looked at Weaver and said, "Umph! Mama Ruthie, and now what will you tell the Christians in North America when you return home?"

"What can I possibly say?" Weaver asked.

"You will tell them," she replied, "that the women of Africa are strong and that the future of the people in these camps will be built on the strength of women such as her."

More than once refugee women said, "Jesus is my helper, my strength, my comforter. He shares with me in my troubles. He teaches me."

People meeting in a newly formed church in Tulsa have named their church "Pearl of Great Price Mennonite Church." They say the analogy of how pearls are formed illustrates well their vision of how they hope God will be able to use their cell groups to transform people's lives.

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Several Mennonite Central Committee workers who left Haiti due to political unrest are now returning to that island nation. Calling this "an exciting time for Haiti," Gordon Zook, MCC Haiti country representative, says, "It's time to get back to work in Haiti." During the months they were in North America, the MCC Haiti workers continued to serve in various ways. Gordon Zook worked on Haitian advocacy programs with the MCC U.S. Washington office. Sharon Wyse Miller studied mediation to prepare for potential conciliation initiatives in Haiti. Duane Miller helped prepare MCC shipments to Rwanda. Ed Dening helped coordinate a youth summer employment program for MCC Alberta.

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African Mennonite and Brethren in Christ leaders agree that their churches across Africa face the same problems: power struggles and authoritarian leadership, growing dispute over charismatic worship, women's ordination, polygamy, tribalism, foreign aid, generation gap, immorality, sexual impropriety, misappropriation of funds and failure to speak the truth. The list stems from meetings Sept. 29-Oct. 1 in Limuru, Kenya, of leaders from across Africa. Taore Siaka of Burkina Faso commented on Africa's relationship with the West. "Africa must prepare to be the center of a missionary body to be sent to the West. We ask the West to restore the wealth it has stolen from us. We too in Africa have a spiritual debt to the West, which brought us Christianity, and now we need to share our spiritual wealth with the West and the world at large."

Building manager Norma Wiens burns the promissory note for Western District Conference's headquarters at a celebration Oct. 22. Using $41,000 from its Centennial Fund Drive, the conference paid off its debt on the conference center in North Newton, Kan.

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Christian Peacemaker Teams members in Haiti presented a plaque to the Haitian people Oct. 29 in Port au Prince at a memorial to a runaway slave. It read, "This plaque commemorates the valiant struggle of the Haitian people for democracy with justice during the bitter years of military rule from Sept. 30, 1991, to Oct. 15, 1994. The world is indebted to the thousands who gave their lives, many in unmarked graves, and the hundreds of thousands whose resistance to oppression helped keep hope alive. We remember them with prayers of thanks for the lessons of nonviolent perseverance they bring to all humankind. Presented by Christian Peacemaker Teams for the Peace Churches of Canada and the United States, October 1994."

MEDA proceeds on Haiti project

Winnipeg (MEDA)—The Canadian government has given the go-ahead to a stalled Haitian job-creation project it awarded last year to Mennonite Economic Development Associates.

In September 1993, MEDA won a $5 million contract from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to help jump-start Haiti's economy after two years of political turmoil. The contract was for a short-term civil reconstruction project to recapitalize the poorest levels of society by funding labor-intensive job-creation activities such as rebuilding roads, canals, sewers and garbage disposal facilities.

Ongoing unrest and the refusal of the military government to permit the return of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide stalled the start of the project. CIDA asked MEDA to put the project on hold until the political situation improved.

With the recent return of President Aristide and growing hopes for civil stability in Haiti, the Canadian government put the project back in gear. On Oct. 20, MEDA was given the green light to proceed.

Jean Claude Cerin, a Haitian who has been living in Philadelphia while studying at Eastern College, will direct the project as well as serve as MEDA's country manager in Haiti. He hopes to revisit Haiti in coming weeks to fine-tune plans and possibly move his family back in January 1995. He expects to begin receiving proposals soon from the local partner organizations so that actual work could be under way by February or March 1995. The project will call for a lot of screening and monitoring, as "demand will be very high," says Cerin.

MEDA will administer a fund through which local organizations will be selected to take on various parts of the reconstruction. The immediate impact will be to

- create a million person-days of short-term employment over the next three to five years;
- inject $2.1 million into the economy in direct labor payments;
- inject $1.1 million into the economy through the purchase of local goods and services.

The longer-term benefits include rehabilitating physical infrastructure and supplying rural workers with the tools they need for agricultural development.

The MEDA project is one part of a larger Canadian response that will see $30 million of Canadian aid injected into the Haitian economy in coming months. The U.S. government, meanwhile, has pledged more than $1 billion in aid over the next five years.

The aid is considered vital to the revival of Haiti, which has seen a collapse of essential services during the crisis. The national treasury has been depleted, and public services like schools, roads, hospitals and electricity have ground to a halt. Half the work force is reportedly idle.

Despite the delay of this project, MEDA's involvement in Haiti has continued. Earlier this year its small-business development program spun off a locally owned credit union, offering specialized services for the urban poor, which has remained active and vibrant despite the difficult conditions.

The new project gives MEDA a chance to provide a different range of emergency services, says Allan Sauder, MEDA's director of international operations. "The needs are even more acute than when the project was designed," he says. "We're excited to be able to maintain our commitment to the Haitian people."

Peacemakers criticize U.S. role in Haiti's future

Newton, Kan.—A Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation from the United States and Canada entered Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on Oct. 19, four days after President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's return. The group returned Oct. 30, criticizing the lack of U.S. determination to disarm Haitians and purge the Haitian military.

CPT has maintained a presence in Jeremie, Haiti, since November 1993, working to diminish the threat of repressive violence against the population. "I am ashamed and embarrassed that those foreigners in St. Helens have been doing the work of keeping the people secure for the past year," said Rigard Jean, chief of police in Jeremie, of the CPT group. The group's work has included acting as

continued on page 20

Stories of Women

Amish Women: Lives and Stories, *by Louise Stoltzfus*

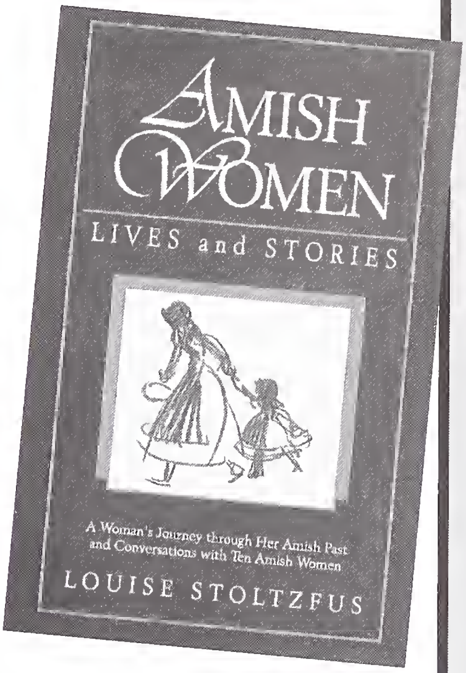
Little has been written about Amish women. How are they unique? How are they typical? How do they find expression in a place that values community togetherness above all else?

This generous and heartwarming book explores what it means to be a woman and to be Amish. The author, who was born and raised in a Lancaster County Amish family, weaves her stories through a series of interviews and interactions with Amish women, many of whom she has known most of her life.

Meet Naomi whose favorite author is C.S. Lewis. Susie who is an artist. And Esther who has lost two children and spends much of her time reaching out to other members of her community who have suffered loss.

A gentle, lyrical look at what it means to be an Amish woman.

5½ x 8½ • 123 pages • Black-and-white illustrations • hardcover with dustjacket • $14.95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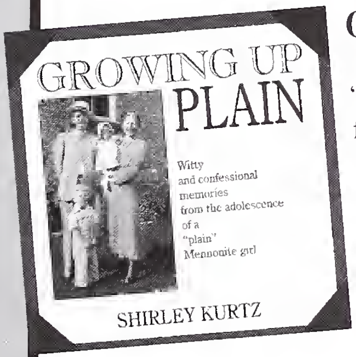
LIVES and STORIES
A Woman's Journey through Her Amish Past and Conversations with Ten Amish Women
LOUISE STOLTZFUS


GROWING UP PLAIN
Witty and confessional memories from the adolescence of a "plain" Mennonite girl
SHIRLEY KURTZ

Growing Up Plain, *by Shirley Kurtz*

What is it like to be a young woman who dresses "plain"? How does it feel to be so identifiably different? What allowed Shirley Kurtz to find warmth and humor in her Mennonite upbringing?

In this witty and lightly confessional memory, Kurtz unearths the painful and hilarious details of marching through adolescence.

While there is every adolescent's uncertainty in these pages, there is also the wonder of being loved. ("You have to understand this: my mother was doing her best. My mother wanted me to be happy.")

5½ x 5½ • 63 pages • 23 black-and-white illustrations • hardcover with dustjacket • $9.95

A Mennonite Woman's Life
photographs by Ruth Hershey (1895-1990)
text by Phyllis Pellman Good

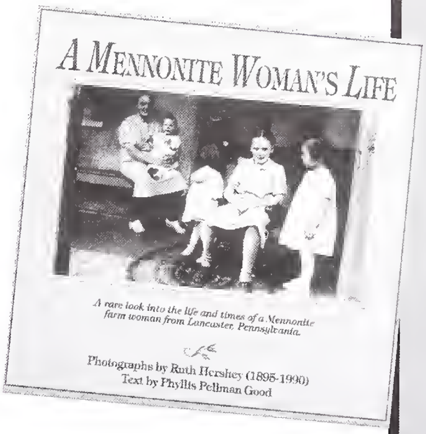
Mennonite women, whose lives stretched from the closing years of the last century and the early decades of the current one, were, for the most part, sturdy homemakers, mothers, and farm wives. One of these women, Ruth Hershey of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, kept a box camera near her children, her homestead, her garden, and her drop-in company. It accompanied her on excursions to town, the ocean, and visits with friends.

But as this rare collection of photographs shows, Mrs. Hershey recorded life with an unusually artistic flair.

The text explores the world of Mennonite women in the early part of this century.

"Recorded as it is by the intelligent lens of Ruth Hershey and the thoughtful descriptions of Phyllis Pellman Good, the book is a warm and lively portrait." —Washington Post

8 x 8 • 96 pages • 55 historic black-and-white photographs • paperback • $11.95


A MENNONITE WOMAN'S LIFE
A rare look into the life and times of a Mennonite farm woman from Lancaster, Pennsylvania.
Photographs by Ruth Hershey (1895-1990)
Text by Phyllis Pellman Good

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On Aug. 1 Minnesota banned the sale of "Crazy Horse" malt liquor. The action group Honor Our Neighbors' Origins and Rights gathered nearly 2,000 signatures in opposition to the malt liquor, which bears a label depicting the 19th-century Lakota leader.

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Twenty percent of Russians say they were once atheists but that they now believe in God. The change is even greater among the young. A third of Russians under age 25 say they have converted from atheism to faith in God. The figures come from a survey of 3,000 Russians by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. David Barrett, editor of the World Christian Encyclopedia, calls this "one of the most enormous swings in the history of Christianity." (*Encounter*)

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Two months into a year-long tour across North America, Elfrieda Dyck suffered a stroke Nov. 3 in Coaldale, Alta. Dyck and her husband, Peter, were telling stories about Mennonite Central Committee in churches across North America as part of MCC's 75th-anniversary celebrations. Doctors think she may have suffered a second stroke Nov. 5. On Nov. 6, Dyck, 77, was responsive and comfortable, but by Nov. 8 she was again unresponsive. Her right side is paralyzed. The Dycks plan to fly to their Akron, Pa., home as soon as possible. Other travel plans are on hold.

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Mennonite Disaster Service has begun cleanup in Texas from October flooding. "More than 10,700 families have been affected," says MDS staffer Rick Augsburger. Heavy rains beginning Oct. 16 led to flooding that claimed at least 15 lives. MDS investigators arrived in the area Oct. 24, using Houston Mennonite Church as a temporary office. MDS continues to repair damage from last year's Midwest floods, the January California earthquake and summer flooding in Georgia. "MDS volunteers have not had a rest ... since Hurricane Hugo hit in fall 1989," said Augsburger.

advocates between government officials and Haitian commonfolk and translating between the U.S. military and local Haitians.

CPT reports that while the U.S. invasion has brought some degree of stability, peace is far from reality. U.S. troops have brought Haiti's elected president back and have allowed many Haitians in hiding to return home, but U.S. forces have not disarmed many civilians and military personnel suspected of hiding arms.

Because of U.S. troops' refusal to disarm Haitians, CPT reports, groups of local people have banded together to nonviolently drive out armed militia in some places. But CPT also reports continued repression in the countryside.

And while the embargo has been lifted, CPT reports supplies do not go directly to Haiti's neediest but have become another bargaining chip for those in power. They report that in Jeremie, rice, corn and cooking oil are in the hands of the local paramilitary who sell supplies at exorbitant prices.

Fears of future repression are aggravated by predictions that many former Haitian military officers may continue on in Haiti's new police force. One U.S. officer estimated that as many as one-third of the new military could come from the former military. *Larry Penner from CPT reports*

MCEC wades through structural issues

London, Ont. (GCMC)—Proposed changes to church structures at two levels occupied most of the time at the Oct. 29 fall delegate session of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (MCEC) here.

In the morning, delegates heard from the general secretaries of two North America-wide Mennonite groups that are considering a merger in eight years. Jim Lapp, from Elkhart, Ind., spoke for the Mennonite Church; Vern Preheim, from Newton, Kan., spoke for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Delegates seemed to welcome the idea of a merger, as well as the call for separate U.S. and Canadian structures. They expressed concern, however, about a recent proposal that more weight be put on the separate national structures than on an umbrella structure spanning the U.S.-Canadian border.

"Let's not overstate the unique agenda," cautioned Sam Steiner, from St. Jacobs, Ont. "But we do have some," he added. Adelaide Fransen, from Vineland, Ont., warned against becoming "too nationalistic."

The decision on the merger proposal will be made at a joint Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church gathering in Wichita, Kan., July 1995.

The second set of organizational discussions focused on MCEC itself.

Delegates approved a new structure that eliminated one commission (congregational resources), downsized the mandate of another (education and nurture) and created three new ones: peace, justice and social concerns; student and young adult ministries; youth ministries.

The MCEC executive committee announced the start of a two-year process of setting priorities. Delegates urged that more consultation with "people in the pews" be built into the process.

The executive committee also tested a proposal for how to distribute congregational donations to the regional, national and binational conferences. The committee suggested that a formula be developed on the basis of giving patterns from the past two years.

Delegates cautioned that this approach would work only if most of the congregations agreed to follow the formula, rather than well-established patterns of designated giving.

The finance commission announced that next year's budget will be the same as this year's. At the same time, the commission asked for a 3 percent increase in giving next year to cover inflationary increases and make money available for new programs.

The day included the commissioning of three new conference staff: Ilene Bergen as Christian education minister, Doris Gascho as conference minister, and Mark Diller Harder as student and young adult minister. Delegates expressed appreciation to Robert and Lois Witmer for their ministry in Quebec; they also recognized the Cambodian Christian Centre in Toronto as an "emerging congregation" in the conference. *Ron Rempel, editor of the* Mennonite Reporter

Titus Peachey (MCC)

Risky business: *At the end of September two 10-person teams equipped, trained and supervised by Mennonite Central Committee and the Mines Advisory Group, began the task of clearing hundreds of thousands of unexploded cluster bomblets from Xieng Khouang province in northern Laos. The clearing begins more than 20 years after the United States secretly rained some 300,000 tons of bombs on the province.*

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., announces an opening for **director of admissions** (recruitment) to be filled no later than July 1, 1995, earlier if possible. The position will be full time. Applicants should be from the General Conference Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church. Preference for applicants with a seminary degree and familiarity with GC and MC constituencies. Job description available on request.

Those interested in the position should send a letter of application, résumé and references by Dec. 15 to **Richard A. Kauffman, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517-1999; (219) 296-6244, fax (219) 295-0092.**

Mennonite Collegiate Institute invites applications for the position of **principal**. MCI, a 150-student residential church school in Gretna, Man., offers a senior 1-4 (grades 9-12) program. In its second century of excellence, MCI is noted for its strong academic/Bible curriculum fine music/drama programs and challenging athletic opportunities.

The principal oversees day-to-day operations of MCI and is responsible to the board of directors. Applicants are expected to support MCI's mission statement, hold a valid teaching certificate and possess strong public relations skills. Administrative experience and a background in theology would be a definite asset. The candidate should have a strong commitment to Christ within an Anabaptist/Mennonite orientation. Duties will begin July 1995.

Send résumé and three references **by Jan. 15, 1995,** to **Principal Search Committee, Box 313, Gretna, MB R0G 0V0.**

Winter conferences for business professionals and entrepreneurs will be held in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Feb. 3-4, 1995, and Phoenix March 16-20, 1995. The General Conference Mennonite Church is sponsoring events which include fellowship, learning, golf and food! You'll learn to know how others in business handle success and problems. Participants will share how a relationship with the church can help in business and how your leadership can enhance your church and conference.

Call or write **Gary Franz** for a brochure: (316) 283-5100 or **General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347.**

Hesston College invites applications for the position of **associate director of development**. The qualified applicant will be a person of integrity, able to accept responsibility and work independently. She or he will have excellent verbal and written communication skills, and an understanding of and a commitment to the Mennonite Church, Hesston College and Mennonite higher education. The associate director of development cultivates relationships with Hesston College constituents, develops and implements strategies to achieve the annual fund goal, assists with the college's partner program for donors and manages all development office efforts in his or her assigned region.

To apply send résumé and cover letter to **Director of Development, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062.** Applications will be accepted until Dec. 1 or until the position is filled. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Pastoral ministry at AMBS:

Nurture a character and soul for ministry

Erick J. Sawatzky, D.Min., director of field education, assistant professor of pastoral ministry

"Ministry has to have a **soul.** It's essential for a person to develop the spiritual dimensions of his or her life; then other aspects of ministry can be learned.

"I hope through the courses I teach that students will learn not only how-to's, but that they **also** will become more aware of who they are as people of God."

Growing up on a Saskatchewan farm, Erick Sawatzky did not intend to become a pastor or professor. His experiences in college, at AMBS and in a congregational internship helped him hear God's call. Now, as he links student interns with congregations, they have opportunities to find new excitement for ministry.

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Reviews

BOOKS

THE WHOLE STEWARDSHIP PICTURE

A Workbook on Biblical Stewardship *by Richard E. Rusbuldt (Eerdmans, 1994, 120 pages)*

Reviewed by Lynn A. Miller, West Liberty, Ohio

As an author I occasionally read a book that makes me say, "Boy, I wish I had written that." That was my reaction to *A Workbook on Biblical Stewardship* by Richard E. Rusbuldt.

This is the first recent writing on stewardship I have seen that presents the Christian community with the clear choice between being a steward in the mold of the world or in the "biblical model." That challenge is contained in the author's Anabaptist assertion that "the Christian lifestyle is a matter of faithful response to God rather than accommodation to the culture" and is further defined as our engaging in a life of "confrontive care-managing" of what God has entrusted to us.

The author begins with what you might expect in the North American context (money and possessions), but he quickly broadens our concern to our care for the Earth, life, time, the gifts of the Spirit and our relationships with God and each other.

Of particular help is his discussion of our giving being a response to what God has done for us. And although the author does not actually use the word "worship" to describe that activity, he claims our stewarding work to be a part of the lordship of Christ.

Another helpful part of this workbook is the author's description of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, making a clear and useful distinction between the *Gift* (singular, the indwelling Presence), the *gifts* (plural, the supernatural abilities) and our natural talents. (How I wish I had read this in the midst of the charismatic confusion of 20 years ago!)

In every one of the nine chapters there are moments of self-evaluation as well as invitations to further growth, making this workbook an excellent choice for a small group or a Sunday school class to study.

PRISON PERSPECTIVE

The Fall of the Prison: Biblical Perspectives on Prison Abolition *by Lee Griffith (Eerdmans, 1993, 258 pages)*

Reviewed by Ulli Klemm, Pittsburgh

For Christians who wish to grapple seriously with Christ's simple yet seemingly scandalous mandate to "free the captives," *The Fall of the Prison* must be read.

In a society obsessed with building more and more human warehouses as a response to crime, author Lee Griffith beckons his readers to heed a different call. The response of society to cage its own, according to Griffith, has produced the very evil it was meant to curb and prevent. Corrections is big business, Griffith notes, a business that has soared at the expense of victims, offenders, correctional officers and taxpayers alike.

From his personal experiences as a prisoner and as a victim, Griffith unmasks prisons for what they are: places of violence, revenge and death. They do nothing to address deep-rooted societal problems that create crime.

In this well-documented critique of our "correctional" system, Griffith examines prisons from the perspectives of sociology, theology, history and the biblical story. He exposes the myths surrounding who fills our prisons and why. He invites readers to regard the imprisoned neither as angels nor as monsters but as sisters and brothers, as human beings.

This book is recommended for those of us who have unconsciously bought into the noisy, media-fed images of prisoners and prisons, for those of us who have found our hearts of compassion for the imprisoned being replaced with hearts of judgment, indignation and indifference. It is a book that challenges those of us involved in prison visitation and ministry to expand our caring for the incarcerated to include finding ways to truly set prisoners free.

Ultimately, *The Fall of the Prison* calls us to follow Jesus the Prisoner, who on a hill named Golgotha redeemed all prisoners with the rest of humanity, and whose subsequent resurrection broke the power of the prison and has set us all free.

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Resources

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A Christmas resource list

- **The Gift of Messiah** is a 76-minute recording of excerpts from Handel's *Messiah.* Proceeds go to support Mennonite Central Committee and Habitat for Humanity. Available from MCC, Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; or from local MCC offices, Self-Help Crafts stores, or from Habitat for Humanity. Audiocassettes $11 U.S./$16 Cdn.; CDs $16 U.S./ $23 Cdn. Call (800) 313-6226.
- **Advent Thirst ... Christmas Hope: Prayer and Meditation for the Journey** by Anita M. Constance (Paulist Press, 1994, $4.95 U.S.) provides a brief scriptural quote, meditation and poetic prayer for each day of Advent.
- **To Dance with God: Family Ritual and Community Celebration** by Gertrud Mueller Nelson (Paulist Press, 1994, $12.95 U.S.) has practical suggestions for family and community celebrations; also shows how to plan rituals for the entire church year.
- **A Season for Giving** by Susan Heyboer O'Keefe (Paulist Press, 1994, $2.95 U.S.) is a story about a Catholic boy and a Jewish boy who learn to respect and appreciate their different beliefs while working on a project about Hanukkah and Christmas. For ages 4 to 8.
- **Come to Christmas: the Customs of the Advent Season** compiled by Peg Augustine (Abingdon Press, 1993, $1.50 U.S.) answers questions about Advent traditions and symbols such as the Jesse Tree, poinsettias, Los Posadas.
- **Good News of Great Joy: Advent Devotions for the Home** by Gracia Grindal and Karen E. Hong (Augsburg, 1994, $4.99 U.S.) includes devotions based on the visitations of angels to Zechariah, Mary, Joseph and the shepherds; each also includes a simplified meditation for children, suggested activity and concluding prayer.
- **The Christmas Eve Storyteller** by Edward Hays (Forest of Peace Books, 1992 & 1993; book $16.95 U.S., set of two audiocassettes $16.95) contains seven Christmas tales told to a family on Christmas Eve by a mysterious stranger.
- **The Christmas Survival Book** by Alice Slaikeu Lawhead (Lion, 1990, $14.95 U.S.) includes ideas for restoring the presence of Christ in Christmas.
- **Unplug the Christmas Machine: A Complete Guide to Putting Love and Joy Back into the Season** by Jo Robinson and Jean Coppock Staeheli (Quill, 1982, $8.95 U.S.) is a guide to creating a joyful, stress-free holiday season.
- **Joy to the World: Christmas Celebrations, Customs and Crafts from Many Lands** by Phyllis Vos Wezeman (Ave Maria Press, 1992, $11.95 U.S.) is a collection of flexible ideas with international themes.
- **101 Ideas for the Best-Ever Christmas** by Caryl Waller Krueger (Dimensions, 1992, $15 U.S.) features ideas for family activities, stories, crafts, recipes and Bible reading.
- **Jesus Among Us: Daily Advent Prayers for Families** by Gwen Costello (Twenty-Third Publications, 1994, $.99 U.S.) will help families celebrate the season of Advent together with prayers, activities and readings for each day.

A FAITH & LIFE Christmas

Capture the Wonder, Majesty, and Mystery this Christmas

Untold Stories of Advent
by Mark Vincent
Rediscover the mystery and inspiration of Christmas! Five often-ignored Advent stories lead us to a fresh understanding of the message of Christ's birth.
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by Marilyn Houser Hamm
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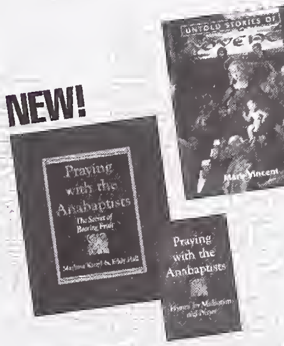
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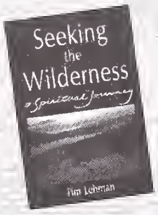

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Editorial

The quiet of the land

Americans will spend less than $8 billion this year at movie theater box offices and $8 billion on recorded music. They will spend more than $330 billion gambling. That estimate, by law professor and gambling analyst I. Nelson Rose of Whittier Law School, Los Angeles, spans the gamut of gambling in the United States, which includes bets on horses, dogs, jai-alai, casinos, slot machines, sports bookmaking, card rooms and church bingo.

In an article for *Christian Social Action*, Rose shows the ridiculousness of legislating the gambling market. Louisiana, after legalizing up to 50 video poker machines per truck stop, finally had to declare that a store cannot be a truck stop unless it sells gasoline.

A Mennonite couple won over $150,000. But their church has not been able to discuss it.

My state, too, is after the lucky buck. At least one or two instant-win games, sponsored by our state government, flank nearly every grocery store or gas station cash register in Kansas.

Like every ticket buyer, the state is trying to cash in on a fortune without working for the money. To a state legislator, the lottery promises millions in revenue for schools, social services and city maintenance without raising taxes. The lure of free cash has made states and provinces across North America turn 180 degrees from condemning gambling as immoral to promoting state-sponsored games and backing them with big-dollar advertising campaigns.

Gambling is wrong: But lottery players lose more than they win, and the state stands to lose the most of all. Gambling drains disposable cash from communities, cash that could be supporting local business. A community like Las Vegas can thrive by draining tourist dollars from other areas, but local gambling only hurts the local economy.

Condemning the gaming industry is the easy part. Sorting out our individual responsibility is not so easy.

Or is it? Is it wrong to buy a $1 lottery ticket? Such a small drop will not affect the lottery's cash ocean. And is it wrong for a Native American tribe to operate a casino (see page 6) if the net effect is to transfer money from nearby wealthy communities into a community that needs an economic boost, especially if the state is unwilling to allocate more funds to reservations?

If we choose to avoid race tracks and casinos, do we invest in commodities or stocks, betting that their value will rise and that we will know when to sell? The odds may be better, but the principle—risking money to make more—remains the same.

Fuzzy morality: The morality of gambling seems clear-cut, but it raises trickier questions of financial stewardship and responsibility. As the world's wealthiest Christians, we North Americans carry a special responsibility to integrate our spirituality and our cash flow. But how many ministers feel free to preach on financial questions? How many church members freely discuss their investments with other church members?

Break the silence: We Mennonites, who like being called "the quiet in the land," have a knack for remaining silent among ourselves on issues that affect us most. A few weeks ago a Mennonite couple won over $150,000 in a state lottery. But their church has not openly discussed it.

As gambling becomes more and more acceptable in the general public, Mennonites have remained silent on the issue. In a notable exception, Mennonite Central Committee Canada decided in September 1993 not to accept money from province lottery revenues. MCC Alberta, which received $24,000 from the Alberta government in 1992 for development work, did not apply for renewed funding after the government aid association merged with the province's lottery-funded foundation. But when winners of a Kansas lottery jackpot purchased a House Against Hunger, built to raise funds for MCC, the sale was justified through the rumor mill by saying the dollars the winners used to pay for the house were not the dollars they had just gained from gambling.

MCC Canada has set two examples for other Mennonites to follow. The first is to protest the lottery, surely, but the greater example is this: to confront an issue of financial stewardship directly and publicly. *Larry Penner*

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For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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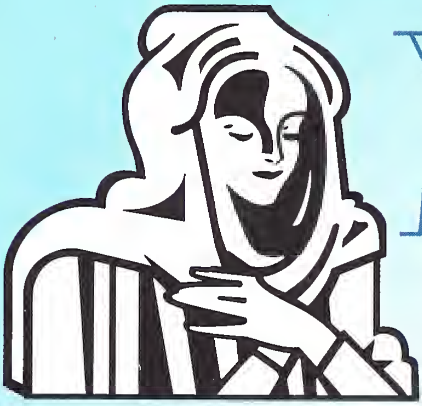

My soul magnifies

the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

(Luke 1:47–49)

- How we stopped fearing the Nazis (see page 3)
- A Christmas I didn't expect (see page 5)
- The God of holy reversal (see page 6)

Prologue

Mary's words on the cover from the Magnificat (Luke 1:47-55) are revolutionary. They address what Kenneth Gibble calls "the God of holy reversal" (see page 6).

While Mary looked toward a future time when justice would prevail, we often approach Christmas with nostalgia for "the good old days." But Christmas is primarily a celebration of hope. Ernest Hochhalter (see page 3) felt hope from a courageous preacher in a Nazi-run refugee camp.

Jeanne Knape (page 5) shows how a spirit of sharing can break into a time of frustration. Marlene Kropf further elaborates on how we can call on hope in difficult circumstances (page 10).

Read J.B. Miller's column (page 12) for ideas about stewardship gifts for Christmas. His advice is sorely needed in our society, which spends inordinate amounts of money on Christmas gifts, while millions go homeless. U.S. citizens spend $40 billion each year on Christmas presents. That's $700 per person, more than all charitable giving by individuals each year.

Our staff wishes each of you the hope, joy and peace that God's revolution promises. *gh*

Merry Christmas: *John, Gordon, Larry and Melanie*

Next issue: A city on a hill in Fresno

Cover: Design by John Hiebert

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How we stopped fearing the NAZIS

The author recalls a Christmas Eve as a 6-year-old in a Nazi-run refugee camp.

Ernest Hochhalter

Christmas Eve in Litzmannstadt (Poland) in 1943 was white, as I remember it. White flaky snow covered all the dirt and mud. Everything seemed so quiet, and people talked in hushed voices. Was it in awe of the silent and holy spirit in the air, or was it fear of being heard by Nazis? Not everyone in the refugee camp dared to go to the Christmas Eve celebration, but our whole family decided to go.

> Praediger Goetze was the only one who could convince our little family that the Nazis would not dominate the world, because someone much more powerful was in charge.

Huge flakes were still falling when we took the trolley to a little Protestant church somewhere in Litzmannstadt. My mother, Katherina, held my baby brother Victor in her arms. My grandmother, Dorothea Hochhalter, was wearing a black, knitted, woolen kerchief, as usual. My Aunt Olga always had a long, plaited pigtail rolled up in a bun. I wore my Russian soldier cap with the floppy ears and sat beside my little sister Amalie to make sure she did not get lost. This was our first ride in a trolley, and we were impressed and excited. It was hard not to talk too loudly and not to say anything in Russian. We were being shushed on most of the trip by Aunt Olga.

The reason our family was in the camp was not my Russian soldier cap. The real reason was my Aunt Olga Margolin. Aunt Olga had married a Jew named Sasha Margolin. He had been converted to Christianity and had actually become a preacher in the secret Christian church services at that time in Russia. These services never stayed secret long. Many preachers were betrayed and deported. Sasha Margolin was caught just one month after he married my Aunt Olga and was never heard from again.

Aunt Olga kept his Jewish name, Margolin. The Nazi commandant in Litzmannstadt identified the Jewish name immediately when we came to camp. My aunt was notified that if she did not change her Jewish name, then she, too, would die in a Jewish concentration camp, and the rest of us would also be sent there.

Nazi uncles: Anyone who has seen the movie *Schindler's List* is aware of the power these camp guards had regarding Jews. Some Germans claim they did not know about the death camps, but I remember the terror that gripped my mother and my grandmother. I remember other children in different parts of Germany who told me grizzly details of what their Nazi

We stopped being afraid on that Christmas Eve, and there were no more arguments about my aunt changing her Jewish name.

"Marching Weavers" by Kaethe Kollwitz © Galerie St. Etienne, New York

uncles had done to Jews. This was not a secret. We were afraid. From the time we entered this refugee camp there were arguments between my aunt, my mother and my grandmother because Aunt Olga did not want to change her Jewish name Margolin back to her maiden name Hochhalter.

As a little boy it was confusing to me. So many good German soldiers had fought and died in Russia to save us from the Communists, and now these Nazis were going to murder us over a silly thing like a Jewish name. I sometimes wore my Russian soldier cap just to show my defiance of the Nazis.

The little Baptist church where we arrived was simple. I only remember that inside it was well-lighted with electric lights but no colored lights. There were a few evergreen boughs for decoration, but the most outstanding feature was a 10-foot-high Christmas tree. It was simply decorated but generously bedecked with wax candles. Later in the service, when the candles were all lighted and the electric lights extinguished, we all sang some Christmas carols.

The only other things I remember are that a small pump organ played and that some "angels" dressed in white sang. At the end of the evening all children received a small bag of candy. For a long time afterward this was my image of what heaven must be like. For a long time these visual images were my only recollections.

Now when I reflect back on that evening, however, I realize that the climax of that Christmas Eve was the message delivered by a brave little man called "Praediger Goetze" (Preacher Goetze).

As a 6-year-old boy, I did not receive the full effect of the preacher's sermon. His theme about the evil Nazis was familiar to me because they had terrified us almost every day in the six months we had been at this camp.

God's wrath: To me as a 6-year-old boy, the highlight of Christmas Eve 1943 was seeing my first lit-up Christmas tree, getting a bag of candy and my first ride on a trolley. But now I know that something much more important happened. My mother often spoke later of Praediger Goetze. His message had always been that the Jews were God's people and that anyone harming the Jews was also going to face God's wrath. Praediger Goetze was the only one who could convince our little family that the Nazis would not dominate the world, because someone much more powerful was in charge. As I remember it now, we stopped being afraid on that Christmas Eve, and there were no more arguments about my aunt changing her Jewish name. We felt certain that good had to triumph over evil, even if we had to suffer for a little while.

Aunt Olga Margolin kept her Jewish name and with my grandmother was welcomed in the United States after the war. They were taken care of by a Christian church in Kansas.* My mother, with three children, was welcomed in Canada by kind relatives. Later, after 24 years in Siberia, my father was allowed to join us. We all learned to have courage in a time of trouble and to care for the oppressed. Because of Christmas there will always be brave people like Praediger Goetze who speak out for the oppressed and teach about the real meaning of Christmas.

Ernest Hochhalter lives in Porters Lake, Nova Scotia.

**Olga and Dorothea came to Newton, Kan., and worked at the Bethel Home for the Aged for many years. Olga was a member of First Mennonite Church in Newton. She died in 1989.*

A Christmas I didn't EXPECT

A disastrous Christmas Eve in an airport becomes a time of sharing and celebration.

Jeanne Knape

For travelers, one of the worst days of the year for an ice storm to hit is Dec. 24. It happened in Kansas several years ago. It was the year I tried to fly to visit my aunt and uncle, missionaries from China, who were in Washington, D.C., for a few days.

As I sat in the airport waiting room, I listened to flight after flight being canceled. The tempers of the people waiting shortened as the weather worsened.

My anger melted away and turned into discouragement after my flight was canceled. I put my name on standby list after standby list, but flights continued to be canceled. With only four flights left before I had no chance to catch my aunt and uncle before they had to return to China, I had almost given up hope of ever getting out of the airport.

When I couldn't concentrate on my book any longer, I watched the people around me. A young couple held their bags, staring straight ahead without speaking to each other. An older couple spoke sharply to each other. Several children cried. No one seemed happy that Christmas was almost here.

> ***After hearing yet another list of canceled flights, I stood up and offered my cookies to the family in the next group of chairs.***

The standby list for my next possible flight was called. When the ticket agent was done, I leaned back in my seat disappointed.

Looking at the people around me again, the situation hadn't changed. As I returned to the book I was trying to read, I spotted the box filled with the raspberry chocolate cookies I had made yesterday. I opened it and ate one.

Impulsively I leaned toward the lady next to me. "Would you like one?" She started at me without smiling. "I baked them yesterday," I explained. "They're raspberry chocolate."

"I'll take one," said the youngster next to her. "I'm starving." After he took three, the lady next to me took one. I watched her bite into it.

"My gosh," she said. "These are good." I offered the box to her again. She took two more.

I thought a bit about my nephews and nieces who had requested these cookies, the expense of the ingredients and the time it took to make them.

After hearing yet another list of canceled flights, I stood up and offered my cookies to the family in the next group of chairs. The lady who had already tasted them turned to the family and said, "Try them. They're good." She then turned toward me. "I hope you'll share your recipe with me."

Each person in the family took a cookie, and so did everyone in the family seated next to them. I kept handing the box around until the cookies were gone.

As I sat down, a young girl about 6 years old handed me a small box wrapped in gold and red paper and said, "Thank you for the cookies." She ran back to her parents.

I slipped the wrap off the box and lifted the lid. The black velvet interior held a small quartz crystal hanging in the center of a silver chain.

I took the necklace out of the box and put it on. I waved thank you to this family. They smiled back. Moments later they left. I watched them board one of the few airplanes trying to head for Chicago.

Before I could settle back into my chair, someone stepped up to me and offered candy from his box of chocolates. I took one. "Take two or three. I have another box to pass around."

Within the next hour, others passed around goodies and exchanged small packages. Several people traded recipes. A toddler sucked his thumb and hugged the teddy bear I meant to give my nephew. I got a trinket box from the lady sitting next to me. Across the room a young woman started playing Christmas carols on her guitar.

Two hours later, long after the last possible flight took off, I went home. It was exciting to tell my family about the Christmas I didn't expect and the strangers who turned my Christmas into something wonderful.

Jeanne Knape lives in Davenport, Iowa.

The God of holy reversal

The song of Mary, Jesus' mother, tells us something about God's agenda.

Kenneth L. Gibble

Why is Christmas the most beloved of holidays? The cynical answer, of course, is that it's all the partying that goes on, along with the buying and gift giving that pumps up the economy. But the real answer to why Christmas is so treasured lies in the song of Mary.

Nearly everyone knows that a young woman named Mary was the mother of a child born in Bethlehem, a child named Jesus. What more do we know about Mary's role in the Christmas story?

In the first chapter of Luke's Gospel we learn that Mary is a young virgin who lives in Nazareth and is engaged to a man named Joseph. Visited by a heavenly messenger named Gabriel, Mary hears that she will bear a child who will be called "the Son of the Most High."

We follow Mary on a visit to her cousin Elizabeth, who is also pregnant. When Elizabeth sees Mary, she greets her with these words:

"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."

Mary responds to her cousin's greeting with a song of praise. Her song has become known as the Magnificat: "My soul magnifies the Lord." Some of the most beautiful Christmas music written over the centuries uses the words of the Magnificat for its text. It begins with Mary praising God: "My spirit rejoices in God my Savior."

Why does Mary rejoice? She tells us, "For God has looked with favor upon the lowliness of his servant." Mary acknowledges her lowly status. What a shocking surprise that God would choose a peasant woman like her to bear the Savior of the world! Surely one might have expected a woman of royal blood to be chosen for such an important role.

But then Mary remembers the nature of this God of Israel. She recites how God has acted in the past, how God has

- scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts,
- brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly,
- filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

Power brokers: What a surprising God this is—a God who turns things upside down, who takes the side of the poor and oppressed, who sabotages the power brokers, who subverts those who flaunt their wealth and privileged status. The God Mary praises in her song is, above all else, a God of holy reversal.

Which is to say that, even before Jesus is born, we get an important clue to his messiahship. We will not be surprised that his birth will take place among humble beasts, that the only ones who attend his birth are lowly shepherds, that he will grow up to be friends of the poor and outcast, that he will tell his followers that servanthood is the mark of true greatness, that his death will be one of utter shame and degradation.

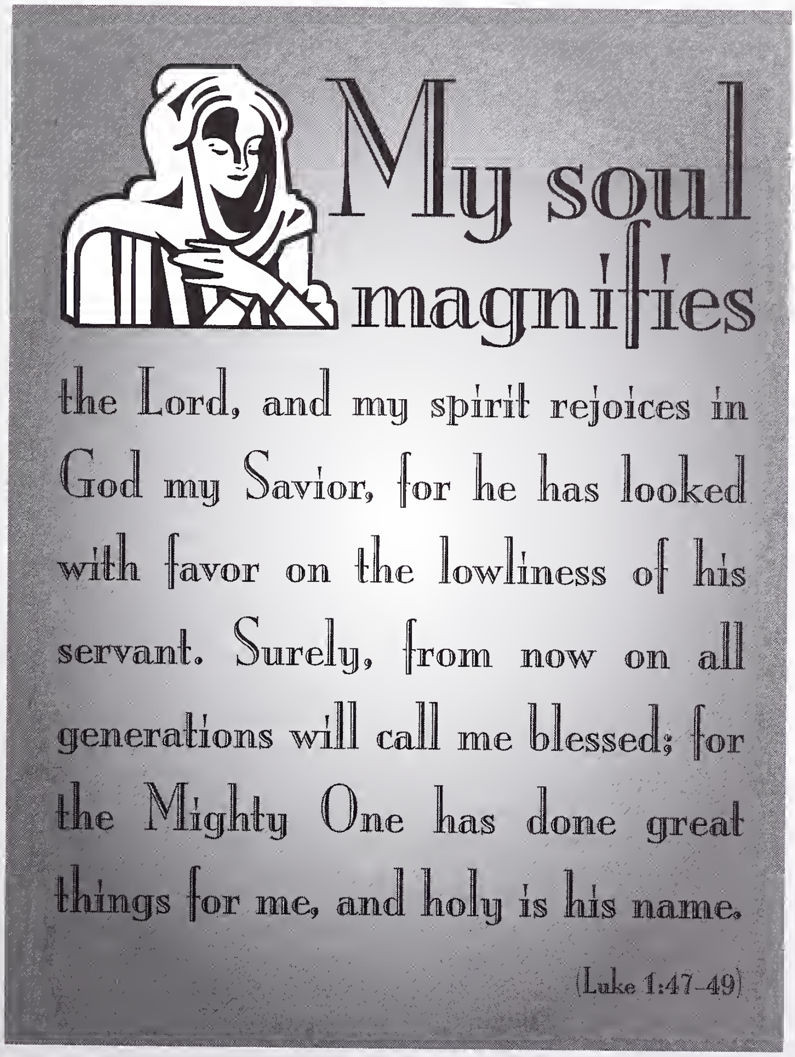
All this is foreshadowed in Mary's song. But it is a song of praise, because Mary knows that God constantly engages in holy reversal to bring salvation to the world God loves so much.

Mary's song celebrates the steadfast hope and faith that the God who turns things upside down is still at work with us and among us. The birth of the Christ child reminds us that all the powers that conspire against us have been and will be overcome. God is at work to overthrow the oppressor, to set captives free, to comfort those who mourn, to satisfy those who hunger and thirst for justice.

What in our world needs to be turned upside down? Is it the ominous trend in our country of the wealthiest getting an ever-growing part of the economic pie, while the poorest poor suffer?

What needs to be reversed? Is it the power of our country's gun lobbies that make possible the highest homicide rate in the world? Is it liquor advertisers who spend millions to convince young people that drinking alcohol is essential to being carefree and "with it"? Is it the epidemic of

The God who turns things upside down seeks to intrude not only into the corridors of social and economic power but into the secret chambers of each human heart as well.



My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

(Luke 1:47-49)

ethnic and racial hatred in Europe, the Middle East and North America, hatred that spawns violence and war?

This is but a small sampling of the powers enthroned in our day that we must pray God will bring down. And we must pray that God will empower us to help it happen. We join with Mary in praising the God who, in Christ, shows that ultimately the powers of evil will be overthrown, that, in the words of Longfellow's Christmas poem, "the wrong shall fail, the right prevail."

Finally, there is one thing more about this holy reversal we must consider, and it is this: What in your life and my life does God need to reverse? The God who turns things upside down seeks to intrude not only into the corridors of social and economic power but into the secret chambers of each human heart as well.

What in your life and mine needs holy reversal? Is it fear? Is it self-centeredness? Is it bitterness from something in the past? Is it a hurtful habit? Is it unhealthy, low self-esteem? Is it pride?

During this holy season take some time to ask yourself this question: If God will give me one gift of holy reversal this Christmas, what will it be? What in my life needs to be turned upside down?

And when you have answered this question, ask the God of holy reversal to give you that gift.

Kenneth L. Gibble lives in Arlington, Va.

Letters

A TIMELY MESSAGE

After reading the editorial in the Oct. 25 issue of *The Mennonite*, I was impressed by the timeliness of the message. First, about the ready acceptance or realization by recent Latin American Christians of the importance of Anabaptist spirituality. Second, calling attention to the gross disparity in regard to things between people of North America and South America, like the fact that Scott and Mary Brubaker-Zehr, who returned in June from service in Colombia, have been especially conscious of "pressure to buy, buy, buy." The desire to have more things is like a disease.

Thank you for sharing this appropriate reminder. *Arnold Claassen, Newton, Kan.*

THE MOST DANGEROUS PLACE

I read with interest the comments about the president's (now-tabled or dead) health-care program. Most notably lacking was discussion about what it would have meant for the future of unborn children.

In our compassion for the poor, weak, imprisoned, handicapped or powerless in our society, let's not overlook those living in the most dangerous place in the United States today—their mothers' wombs!

Proverbs 24:11-12 tells us to rescue those who are unjustly sentenced to death—not to stand back and let them die nor to disclaim responsibility by saying we didn't know [it was a child]. For God, who knows all hearts, knows ours, and he knows we knew.

As Mennonites, let's stand against all forms of exploitation and violence. *Vernell Miller, Hanston, Kan.*

UNITED CHURCH OF PEACE

The Oct. 25 editorial laments the "sad irony that North American Mennonites are shedding the Mennonite label" and "perhaps we need to rediscover our Anabaptist roots."

There is no need to lament the changing of labels. If we are losing our spiritual vitality and growth in discipleship—that is something to lament. Some of us wear our "Mennonite" badge with great pride, yet we are not very Christlike. On the other hand, Mother Teresa is very Christlike and wears a Roman Catholic label. By their "fruits" you shall know them—not their labels.

The Reformation Anabaptists dealt with labels. They would accept no label for themselves, and they would refer to one another only as "brother and sister." Should we lament the fact that the Reformation Anabaptists would not take on the label "Mennonite" or "Anabaptist"? If we followed the Reformation Anabaptists we would shed the name Mennonite.

The Oct. 25 editorial points out three basic themes of early Anabaptist spirituality: (1) immediacy of human relationship with God, (2) a life of discipleship and (3) the corporate nature of the Christian life. The early Anabaptists did not add a fourth: the necessity of pledging allegiance to the "Mennonite" label.

Certainly in 1 Corinthians 1, Paul warns us not to divide Christ's body by choosing human mascots. There is no need to lament when we shed the names of human mascots.

The reality is that each Christian group needs some kind of a label. In this time of MC/GC merger there has been some discussion of what this new united group should call itself. Perhaps the new conference could be called the United Church of Peace. This label would stop pointing people toward Menno Simons and start pointing them to Christ who is the Prince of Peace. It would also accentuate one of our distinctives, which is seeking to be peacemakers in a violence-crazed world. *Dave Waldowski, Sioux Falls, S.D.*

INTEGRATION NOT A GIVEN

After reading the report of the Integration Exploration Committee (Oct. 11 issue), I want to submit my observations and viewpoints.

I belong to a congregation of Mennonite Church background in the integrated Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada. I strongly suggest that the formation of a U.S. conference be placed on the back burner for a long time until one can determine the success of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC). Helmut Harder can't actually say we will be integrated in 1995. True integration will depend upon the degree of participation among the churches from MC background. I suspect that the ones that will participate will be the larger congregations or ones where there is already a mix of people from both streams.

Can you imagine a rural small-town congregation with almost no one of General Conference background, a Sunday attendance of about 125 and having difficulty meeting its current budget sending delegates to the CMC annual sessions, which are usually held somewhere in western Canada? I will be the first to be surprised if it happens. It won't be because no effort was made to explain CMC to our congregation, but low attendance at such meetings does convey a message. Will we even be missed if we are not represented at the annual sessions?

We were always told that the GC churches were more congregational than we were. Yet to make integration work, we have had to accept an extra layer of bureaucracy, one we did not have previously. Isn't that ironic? *Kenneth W. Cressman, New Hamburg, Ont.*

A TUNING FORK

I felt so guilty accepting the payment for my simple little bicycle article (Oct. 11 issue, page 12). What Mary [my wife] and I decided to do with it was use it to purchase some odd-sized tires for a local homeless person's bike. He couldn't believe his eyes, so I told him neither could I when I saw the check from you.

Please accept our sincerest compliments for the excellent work you're doing for us and the world through *The Mennonite.* You are not afraid of the minority stance in faith's effort to hold a tuning fork to this needy age. You're not afraid to call a spade a spade and to let love's power invigorate. *Peter Sprunger-Froese, Colorado Springs, Colo.*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity. Write us at* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, fax (316) 283-0454, e-mail CompuServe 72147,2746.*

Speaking out

A lament for nationalism

Integration will still leave two national groups.

Ted Koontz

I have been sorry to see how General Conference restructuring and MC/GC integration discussions have been going of late, as reported in several recent articles (see *The Mennonite*, Oct. 11, page 13). What I see coming is not one Mennonite body in North America, but still two. Restructuring and integration seem now to mean not overcoming our structural divisions but restructuring them along national lines rather than along "fault lines" arising from our history as Mennonite peoples.

Of course, we talk of wanting to "cooperate" across national boundaries. But I see the "heavy lines" in the new organizational chart being drawn between the countries, and the "dotted lines" linking them. As with MC/GC cooperation now, those lines will mean that we will always need to make an extra effort to work together across the border, rather than being drawn toward doing so naturally, because of our structural arrangements.

I wish our historic MC/GC fault lines could be overcome in many ways, including structurally. I therefore support integration—though only if we can have the grace to see each other as groups that can offer something to one another in our common search for authentic discipleship (rather than some of us seeing others of us as "polluting" our purity or as being hopelessly stodgy). But even more than that I wish our historic fault lines could be overcome, I wish we could avoid falling into what I see as perhaps the most pervasive trap Christians have been prone to fall into—that of making national locations and identities too central to our Christian self-understandings.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

As a U.S. GC who has been in dual congregations and in dual and binational church organizations for 25 years, I have for a long time felt the pressure for more autonomy from Canadian Mennonites. I know I can never fully appreciate the reasons for that pressure, though I believe that one strong reason has been our U.S. tendency to dominate—in this we U.S. Mennonites are not much different from our government. And I know that I cannot, should not force Canadian Mennonites into structures that have been and are dominated by U.S. Mennonites. Yet I feel, even as one who deals with the Christian witness to public policy questions, an area where national differences matter most, that at least 90 percent of the whole agenda of Mennonite churches in our two societies is overlapping if not identical.

It seems a shame to me that we cannot find a way to work more closely together structurally across the border on our common agenda, not least because I see as a central mission of the church the breaking down of barriers of all sorts, including national ones. If we can't work more closely together, with all our commonalities, how do we expect the world's countries to do so?

If we can't work more closely together, with all our commonalities, how do we expect the world's countries to do so?

I will not actively oppose the proposals before us. Perhaps they are the best possible at this point. I am glad for the greater strength and vitality among Canadian Mennonites that in part push us toward this restructuring. But I cannot enthusiastically support these proposals either. Rather I feel mainly a need to lament. I lament that at the same moment when the wounds and divisions we have suffered in our Mennonite body seem to be healing so that we can consider integration, the political lines putting us on opposite sides of a border have become so significant that we must restructure to respect those lines more fully. I lament the loss of meaningful binational structures that I see coming because I have seen them as an integral part of our peace witness. I am aware of no other Protestant bodies that testify in their structures that divisions between nations, "Jew and Greek," are subsumed in their unity in Christ, and I have seen it as a happy accident (really, providential) that we as a peace church have been given this binational legacy.

I will lament the loss of automatic reminders of our national blindspots—reminders that happen when we work in the same structures. I will lament the greater blindness that will result. I will lament the need for more duplication of efforts, less time and energy for mission, that will result from two basic structures rather than one.

I feel a need to repent because we U.S. Mennonites have been so insensitive in our use of power that we have created, or helped create, a need for more autonomy among many Canadian Mennonites. I do not blame Canadian Mennonites for pressing us toward more separate structures. I suspect that we in the United States are more to blame, and so we have no right to block the momentum toward creating structures more divided along the 49th parallel.

If this momentum is to shift, the impetus for the shift will need to come from Canada. I hope a shift will come, but I will not seek to force a shift from the U.S. side, even though I have chosen not to remain silent about my discomfort with what I see emerging.

Despite my discomfort, I intend to follow the lead of my Canadian sisters and brothers in this matter. In the meantime, I will continue to lament and to try to repent. And I will listen to other perceptions of the issues before us—perhaps what I see is mistaken. I will also hope that good may come even if we take what feels to me like a third-best path: the path of structuring along national lines rather than along historic lines, rather than a closer union.

Ted Koontz teaches ethics at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Learning to pray

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

A shelter in the time of storm

Whatever fills our hearts—a prayer or a hymn—is what will be available to us in times of terror or danger.

Marlene Kropf

Unexpectedly I found myself in a hospital emergency room. Full of panic and not knowing what to expect next, I tried to think of a Scripture verse to calm my fears. Nothing came to mind. Frantically I searched my memory for even a scrap of verse from a long ago Bible school class. In the midst of my confusion I remembered nothing. But at last the words of an Isaac Watts hymn floated to the surface:

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home.

I sang the hymn-prayer over and over to myself until at last peace came. I could face whatever happened because I knew God was with me.

What prayers are hidden in our hearts? What resources are near at hand when we face the terrors of the night? How do we prepare ourselves for spiritual emergencies that are bound to happen?

Repeated prayers: One way Christians through the centuries have kept their souls fit and prepared themselves for whatever life brings is by the use of repeated prayers. Though Jesus warned against vain repetition in prayer (Matthew 6:7), Christians have always valued the sincere prayer that is hidden in the heart. From the earliest days of the Christian church, Jesus' followers were encouraged to pray the Lord's Prayer three times daily. In the frequent repetition of that simple prayer, Christians were formed and shaped by the vision of holiness and wholeness that Jesus proclaimed as "the kingdom of God."

Another prayer that has shown amazing durability over the centuries is the "Jesus Prayer." Rooted in the Gospel stories of blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:47) and the humble publican (Luke 18:10-14), the Jesus Prayer is a simple plea:

Lord Jesus Christ, Son
of God,
have mercy on me, a
sinner.

Breathing: Practiced especially by Christians in the Eastern Church, the Jesus Prayer has been handed on from one generation to another as a spiritual discipline to enable one to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). As we repeat the prayer over and over again, the words gradually sink into our hearts and usher us into God's presence. A sense of God's grace and mercy permeates our entire being. Eventually the prayer becomes as natural as breathing.

A prayer that has become such an intimate part of one's experience with God is readily available in times of stress or uncertainty.

A prayer that has become such an intimate part of one's experience with God is readily available in times of stress or uncertainty. In her recent book, *The Rock That Is Higher* (Harold Shaw Publishers, 1993), Madeleine L'Engle tells the story of what happened when she was seriously injured in an automobile accident. As she waited for help to arrive, she says, "The ancient words of the Jesus Prayer, 'Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me,' surfaced in my mind. They have been with me for many years, like a deep, inner fountain. When I wake up in the night they are there—those strong, affirming words."

Later, as she was wheeled to the operating room, she reflected,

"I knew that once I went under the anesthetic I might not come out of it, not in this life. I was not afraid. The Jesus Prayer was still with me, a strong rope to which I held like a sailor fallen from a ship."

Having a prayer in our hearts that will immediately bring comfort and peace is a wonderful benefit of the regular practice of prayer. For some the Jesus Prayer will fill such a need. One could even use a musical setting of the prayer such as "Kyrie eleison" (144) or "Kyrie" (152) in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*. For others the Lord's Prayer would be most comforting. Some will choose a favorite text from the Psalms or another Scripture. For others, like me, the words of a hymn are most likely to be remembered as a "shelter in the time of storm."

After I recuperated and left the hospital, I reflected on what had happened during the first moments of my stay. At first I was chagrined that I had not been able to remember any of the many Scriptures I had once memorized. Then I realized that I had indeed remembered God's Word; the words of Isaac Watt's hymn are a musical setting of Psalm 90.

Whatever fills our hearts is what will be available to us in times of terror or danger. If we choose a simple prayer or hymn and make it our own, it can become a gift by which we experience God's presence when we need it most.

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Profile

God overcame my father's objection

He could not sleep until he relented and let his daughter go to Bible college.

Magdalena Widjaja

I was born fifth in a family of eight children. My father was an ancestor worshiper and my mother a nominal Christian. One day my dad was sick, and the doctor said his sickness was terminal. However, God answered my mom's prayer, and my dad was healed. Since then my mom has become a devout Christian. She brought all her children to church.

When I was a teenager, the Lord spoke to me in one of the worship services, saying that I was a sinner and that I should confess my sin, repent and accept Jesus as my personal savior. At first I said I was not a sinner; only those who did not go to the church needed repentance. I thought I was already a Christian because I went to church every week. I knew many Bible stories. But finally I confessed my sin and accepted Jesus as my personal savior. It was only after making this decision that God's peace filled my heart.

Two years later (in 1967) I felt called to be a full-time minister. But my dad refused to let me go to Bible college. He told me, "To be a pastor means to live a poor life, so don't mention it to me anymore."

I said to God, "If you have really called me, please speak to my dad." God answered my prayer. He used an unusual event to speak to my dad.

My mom used to wake up at three in the morning to pray. One morning when she woke up she was surprised to find my dad sitting on the bed. He had not slept the whole night. My mom asked, "What's wrong with you? Why didn't you sleep?"

My dad said, "I cannot sleep. When I lie down I can't breathe."

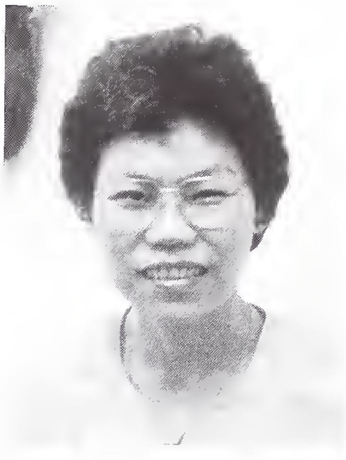
"Did you pray?"

"Yes, I prayed, but I still could not sleep."

Then my mom prayed for him. After her prayer, my dad slept well.

A great mistake: The second and third nights the same event occurred. My mom then said, "Don't you see? We are nothing before the Lord. Why did you not allow our daughter to enroll in the Bible college? You made a great mistake. You are not against her but against God's will for her life. Do you still refuse to let her go?"

Finally, my dad surrendered before God and agreed to let me go to Bible college. He promised to pray for me, too.



Full-time minister: *Magdalena*

I went to Singapore Bible College and studied four years for a bachelor of theology degree. I graduated and ministered in one of the churches in Singapore as a church planter. I saw God's blessing upon the church. Then someone from a church in Indonesia came to Singapore to recruit me. I ministered in that church in Indonesia as an assistant pastor for six years.

Ten years ago I arrived at Canadian Theological Seminary in Regina. I spent two years studying for a master of religious education degree. After graduation I went back to Indonesia for another five years in church planting ministry, plus two years in pastoral ministry.

Magdalena Widjaja is pastor of Chinese ministry at Grace Mennonite Church, Regina, Sask.

Mennonites didn't wear jewelry

Dorothy Shank

Mennonites didn't wear jewelry
in my growing-up years.
The Bible says
women must not adorn themselves
with ornaments and fancy clothes.
But how do you answer a child's yen
when she asks for bracelets, rings
and other worldly things?
Cousin Verna and I solved the problem.
In the old washhouse behind the big house
was a table waiting for two small fry
to have some fun.
We collected lots of candle-leftovers—
crimson, jade, blue, many a brilliant hue—
and melted them down into pliant sheets.
Then came the artistry—
fashioning the tallow stripes
into bracelets, rings
and those other worldly things.
Although not made of gold and silver,
these lovely objets d'art
fulfilled the childhood longings
of two artists in residence.

Dorothy Shank lives in Goshen, Ind.

Fiscal health

Gifts of stewardship for Christmas

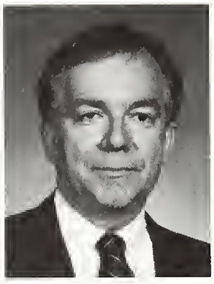
Five books on stewardship to put in a stocking

J.B. Miller

It's nearly Christmas, time to think about buying gifts. Knowing what to give some people can be problematic, but gifts that include books are always appreciated in my house.

Many people are interested in books dealing with money, investments and other topics related to finances. Here are five of my favorites:

- **Money and the Meaning of Life** by Jacob Needleman: This is not a book for those who are looking for a quick guide in how to manage money. Rather, it attempts to work at the relationship between the quest for money and the quest for meaning in our lives. The author raises questions about how money influences our emotional and spiritual lives. Here's an interesting quote: "Money is the raw material out of which we build our lives. But because we don't take money more seriously, we have come to know the price of everything and the value of nothing." Needleman is professor of philosophy at San Francisco State University. This book is recommended for the person looking for something thought-provoking and conceptual.



J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

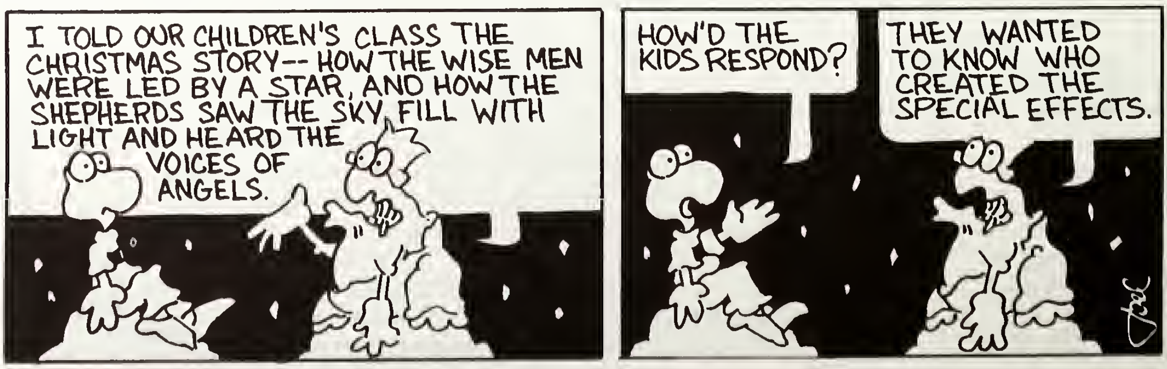
- **New Money Strategies for the '90s** by Terry Savage: One of the best books written for the person who wants a book that deals with a broad range of financial issues. From credit cards to investment concepts and strategies to planning for retirement, this book covers a wide range of financial topics in understandable language. It is a particularly helpful book to have in your personal library because of the many subjects covered. It is not written from a Christian perspective but should be helpful for anyone who wants to learn more about financial matters.

> **"We have come to know the price of everything and the value of nothing."**
> ***Jacob Needleman***

- **Free to Succeed** by Steve Diggs: Subtitled "12 Keys to Experiencing and Enjoying Godly Success," this book deals creatively with the question, "Can Christians really enjoy both happiness and holiness?" While the title may suggest this is just another book written by someone from the "name-it-and-claim-it" school, this is not the case. The author seeks a biblical perspective on self-confidence, competition and leadership, with a careful look at our attitudes about wealth. In a simple, easy-to-read manner the book outlines the basic steps for understanding and dealing with success for the Christian. Each chapter begins with thoughtful quotes. Here is one of my favorites: "For the true follower, the goal is not to be happy, the goal is to be holy." From the chapter on giving, he outlines three principles of godly giving. They are (1) God expects us to give from our firstfruits; (2) giving should be a joyful experience; (3) we should give as we have been given.
- **Investing from the Heart: the Guide to Socially Responsible Investments and Money Management** by Jack A. Brill and Alan Reder: This excellent book is written by two people who are committed to socially responsible investing. Whether you have a lot of resources to invest or just a small amount, this book will show you how to invest so that your investments reflect your beliefs. You will learn how to find socially responsible stocks, bonds, mutual funds and other investment opportunities. It even offers ideas on how to look for socially responsible companies in the areas of banking, insurance and credit cards.
- **The Christian's Guide to Wise Investing** by Gary Moore: This is the 1994 revised edition of a popular book, *A Thoughtful Christian's Guide to Investing*, written by a Christian who now serves as a counselor to ethical and religious investors. He was previously a senior vice president with PaineWebber. Like several of the other books mentioned, this book will help you wade through the often confusing topics of investing. Written with a strong socially responsible investing emphasis, the book helps sort out the various investment options available. I recommend this book for anyone wanting a book from a Christian perspective. It is worth adding to a personal or church library.

While any of these books may have ideas we would not totally agree with, they will prove helpful for the person who is interested—or should be interested—in financial topics.

Pontius' Puddle


I TOLD OUR CHILDREN'S CLASS THE CHRISTMAS STORY-- HOW THE WISE MEN WERE LED BY A STAR, AND HOW THE SHEPHERDS SAW THE SKY FILL WITH LIGHT AND HEARD THE VOICES OF ANGELS.
HOW'D THE KIDS RESPOND?
THEY WANTED TO KNOW WHO CREATED THE SPECIAL EFFECTS.
Joel

AMBS • window

Associated
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Tribute

Marlin E. Miller, AMBS president

It is not unusual for Marlin Miller's photo to appear here on the first page of AMBS Window. But instead of Marlin's words to the church, we have the church's words of tribute to Marlin.

His death on Nov. 3 took everyone by surprise. Out of the shock and the grief have come many testimonies of Marlin's contributions to the church. We include one here. The remainder of this issue was prepared before his death.

Photo by Howard Zehr

Mennonites lost one of their most competent leaders when Marlin E. Miller, president of AMBS, died of a massive heart attack on November 3.

Marlin was 55—an age few of us plan for our death. It's too young. There's too much left to do. Duane Beck, Marlin's pastor, said it this way at the memorial service: "Now is not the time to die, Marlin."

With pain his family must agree. Marlin had many more family memories to be made with his wife, children, and grandchildren. Marlin's congregation, community, and the seminary are also at a loss.

Marlin's work appeared to be unfinished. Yet finished or not, Marlin left us a rich legacy for our future.

He had already shown us, for example, what it takes to integrate two denominations. Marlin had pioneered in merging the GC Mennonite Biblical Seminary and the MC Goshen Biblical Seminary.

At the memorial service, dean Gayle Gerber Koontz, now acting president, described Marlin as one who reached out "across dividing walls"—building bridges between MCs and GCs, between Mennonites in Canada and the United States, between students and faculty, between the business community and the seminary, and between the "community of theological education and the church."

Marlin did it by listening, by stating his opinions and convictions, and then by listening again. Most often his goal seemed to be unity as much as anything else.

Marlin also set a course for our future with his contribution to the new joint Confession of Faith. He was cochair of the committee drafting that confession and was one of three writers. If adopted at Wichita '95, we will have a strong statement of Mennonite faith and belief.

But Marlin would not be content with words on paper. The best celebration and commemoration we can make of his life is to put into practice what it means to follow Jesus Christ as called for in that confession.

Marlin has also shown us how to do that. One of his friends said that Marlin modeled an approach to discipleship best described as "surprised by joy."

In an article titled "Facing the Future with Joy" he said: "The future need not be only the land of uncharted uncertainties. The New Testament tells us that it is rather the playground for the kingdom of God."

That appeared to be the way Marlin lived his life: with quiet joy, surprise, even play.

The kingdom as playground. Joy. Surprise. These are hard to appreciate now in these days of pain and grief. Words like "hole" and "chasm" are more appropriate to describe how we feel.

Someday we may come to understand the surprise, perhaps even the joy, of Marlin's early death. He already has.

The writer is J. Lorne Peachey, editor of Gospel Herald. This tribute is adapted from his editorial in the November 15, 1994 issue.

Inside

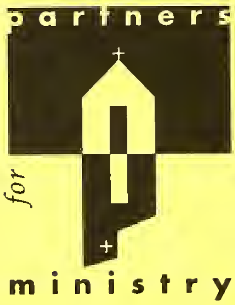
Preparing leaders for the church: James M. Lapp and Vern Preheim

President's Window

AMBS Panorama

Preparing leaders for the church

The church and AMBS, as partners for ministry, help each other fulfill God's mission. Each grows stronger in working together.



In this symbol for the AMBS campaign, the partnership is illustrated with a church building and the AMBS chapel. They are joined on the same foundation and share the same door. To enter the seminary is to step into the life of the church; to enter the church is to benefit from the seminary's work. The partnership strengthens both to live out God's will and serve in God's grace.

Partners for Ministry

by Vern Preheim

Strong congregations and strong conferences are the result of effective, well-trained leaders. The expectation of the church of its leaders, both of pastors in congregations and of administrators in conferences, keeps growing. As this happens, the seminary is increasingly important to the church. Therefore, a strong seminary-conference partnership for ministry is imperative.

The General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church in March 1994 said that the highest priority for the conference is to develop pastoral and lay leadership with strong Mennonite/Anabaptist convictions. The General Board counts heavily on AMBS to partner with it in working on that priority.

In an era of declining denominational loyalty and weakening denominational identity, leadership is critically important. Identity is nurtured and strengthened by pastors and other congregational leaders. As a General Conference, we must double our efforts to train and develop leaders who will work hard at maintaining a clear sense of denominational identity or cave in and lose all sense of loyalty. Our identity will rest heavily on a common sense of what it means to be church. Identity will nurture a sense of loyalty.

It's not only pastors who are critical for strong, healthy congregations. Other leaders, such as Sunday school teachers, deacons, and church council members, are also important. Overall, congregational leadership is strengthened when some of the leaders have some theological education. In many congregations, one or more members in addition to the pastor have had some seminary courses. My dream is that in every congregation, several leaders could take an occasional seminary course. This becomes more feasible when the seminary partners with the conferences in regional efforts, such as those in Kansas, Pennsylvania, and Ontario.

In a time of rapid change and rising expectations, the initial seminary degree needs to be supplemented with continuing education refresher courses. Here, too, AMBS is important.

The seminary also serves a useful function in the friendships which are formed and the trust relationships which are established. Unity in the church in part is undergirded by the trust relationship developed at AMBS or wherever seminary courses are offered.

For all of the above reasons, it is obvious that partnership for ministry of congregations and conferences with AMBS is of critical importance. It must be kept strong and dynamic.

Vern Preheim is general secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Campaign giving opportunities

Partners for Ministry is a three-and-a-half-year comprehensive campaign to strengthen the financial base of AMBS. It includes these giving opportunities:

Library expansion and resources	$2,021,000
Faculty support and development	3,000,000
Continuing education center and program	475,000
Student aid	900,000
Congregational studies	150,000
Mission and evangelism	150,000
Stewardship of buildings and grounds	175,000
Designated gifts	64,000
Campaign expenses	365,000
The AMBS fund *(ongoing operating expenses)*	4,600,000
Total	**$11,900,000**

The priority of pastoral leadership

by James M. Lapp

It is tough to be a leader in any age, especially in the 1990s. Stresses for those willing to be leaders in the church come from diffuse expectations, vulnerability to charges of misconduct, ambivalence about authority and a diverse theological climate.

No leader is more strategic than the pastor in a local congregation. While the mission of the church beyond itself must always be central, the fulfillment of that mission depends on the effectiveness of pastors in proclaiming the vision and equipping members for their calling.

Three facets of the church's responsibility

First, we need to recover the primacy of the pastoral call in the local congregation. Pastors are normally born and nurtured in congregations, not schools. This reality was self-evident for our forebears. Baptismal vows and the "lot" provided a ready supply of pastors. With the change to educated and professional pastors, many congregations lost sight of their essential role in calling gifted people to pastoral leadership.

The Mennonite Church ordains or licenses an average of 75 new pastors each year. Congregations without a pastor or with inadequate leadership do well to examine their own processes for discerning the gifts of members for ministry rather than to lament the state of the church. A barometer of the spiritual health of a congregation is the quickening by the Holy Spirit of some members for pastoral leadership or other forms of ministry.

Second, we need to recognize the importance of Anabaptist-Mennonite training for pastors. If there will be a Mennonite Church in the 21st century, special attention needs to be paid to where and how our pastors are trained.

A church that cares deeply about its faith will state clearly its expectations that pastors utilize the training programs of the church both in preparation for leadership and for continuing education. In a time when other Christians look with appreciation on our tradition of faith we can do no less than insure our own leaders are well grounded in the Anabaptist-Mennonite faith. In a time of theological pluralism it is particularly urgent that pastors are trained to unify the body in a common faith and practice.

Third, we need to vigorously empower pastors to lead. We are coming out of several decades of depreciating leadership, partly due to misguided notions that everyone has an equal leadership role in the congregation. The key issues are not status or domination by leaders, but the need for people who can provide direction. To rightly affirm that all members have gifts from the Spirit for ministry does not eliminate the need for leaders.

Jim Wallis, editor of *Sojourners*, recently wrote, "The alternative to bad leadership is good leadership, not no leadership. Movements, institutions, churches and nations need good sensitive, inclusive, serving and accountable leadership. But they need leadership.... Dissent does not necessarily require strong leadership gifts, but social transformation does." (January 1994, p. 5)

A vision for church leadership

My vision is that in the coming years we will respect pastoral leaders and empower them in new ways. Our training programs, conference ministers and elders/deacons need to link hands with congregations and pastors to make leadership a joyful, life-giving experience. Our very future as a Mennonite Church depends on the success of these efforts.

James M. Lapp is general secretary of the Mennonite Church General Board.

"I am excited that God is leading our seminary to continue providing quality training for our pastors, missionaries and other church related vocations.

"I see the Partners for Ministry campaign providing opportunities for more dialogue between seminary leaders and Mennonite church members regarding the pastoral leadership needs and desires for the present and future church."

Donald L. Schmidt, Newton, Kansas, member of Partners for Ministry steering committee

ign Progress

J. Tyler Klassen

Already more than five million dollars, or forty-three percent of the goal, has been contributed or pledged in the AMBS comprehensive campaign, Marlin E. Miller told guests at the September 18 dedication of the Lambright Center. Partners for Ministry was selected as the campaign theme to emphasize the strong partnership and interdependence between the seminary and the church in preparing pastors, missionaries, church planters, teachers and other leaders.

President's Window

In the lives of institutions, just as in the lives of individuals, memorable and moving moments stand out. Such moments bring earlier events into focus and set in motion events which shape direction and character.

The seminary board's decision to move ahead with the Partners for Ministry campaign on November 2, 1991, is one such moment. A year earlier, AMBS began to work toward fully integrating the Goshen Biblical Seminary and Mennonite Biblical Seminary into one seminary. The year before that, in 1989, accrediting agencies renewed AMBS's full accreditation for another 10 years; AMBS had met or exceeded all standards used to measure quality of program.

But many challenges and questions faced us. What kind of educational and spiritual resources do church leaders need? What kind of congregations will make up the church by the year 2000? With the boom years of the 1980s waning, how do we undergird programs with financial resources? What kind of mission and service ministries will reach out in North America and around the world? Who are the people whom the church will call and who will sense God's call to be pastors, missionaries, teachers, evangelists and other church leaders?

These questions were on the hearts and minds of the board members gathered that day three years ago. At that moment, not everything was clear. They knew there would be risks in launching a campaign—risks in not launching a campaign. Where was the Holy Spirit leading?

Finally, when board members reached consensus and unanimity, they stood and joined hands to pray in gratitude and in petition. A memorable and moving moment.

That moment focused the past and set a new direction. Now new opportunities beckon for people to join this partnership for the church's ministry at home and in the larger world.

- Marlin E. Miller

Youth Ministry in the Maze of the Modern World

Weekend conference
January 13-14, 1995

Featured speaker: Don Posterski, vice president of National Programs for World Vision Canada. Past involvements include student ministry with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship and co-director for Project Teen Canada. His books connect the gospel with culture: *The Emerging Generation* and *Teen Trends*, both co-authored with sociologist Reginald Bibby, and *Reinventing Evangelism.*

Fee: $40. Lodging and meals are extra. For information, call the AMBS Continuing Education office, 219 295-3726.

AMBS Panorama

Fall enrollment

With the overarching theme for the year of "Welcoming the stranger," AMBS welcomed 39 new students to campus.

One hundred and fifty-five students are enrolled in AMBS programs this year, up from 143 last year. The number of full-time students has dropped slightly and the number of part-time students has risen. This year, half of the students are men, half are women—a slightly higher ratio of women to men than previously.

Spring weekend course

The spring course offered at AMBS in weekend sessions will be **Developing New Churches**. The course will be taught by Gary Martin, former instructor in evangelism and church planting at AMBS.

The class will meet Friday evenings, Saturday mornings and afternoons on the following weekends: Feb. 17-18, March 17-18, and April 21-22.

Content will include vision, leadership and support for developing churches, as well as first year strategies and longer-ranger planning.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Consulting editor: Richard A. Kauffman

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Gospel Herald, Mennonite Reporter, The Mennonite.

Fall 1994
Printed in U.S.A.

Partners for Ministry Steering Committee

A committee representing the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite church guides the campaign:

Harold P. Dyck
Hesston, Kan.
Robert G. Frey
Archbold, Ohio
Charles Loewen
Steinbach, Man.
Peter Redekop
Vancouver, B. C.
Mary A. Schiedel
New Hamburg, Ont.
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Newton, Kans.
Carol J. Suter
Kansas City, Mo.
LeRoy Troyer
Mishawaka, Ind.
Allen Yoder Jr.
Middlebury, Ind.
Phil G. Yoder
Iowa City, Iowa

Corrections: 1994 AMBS graduate ***Henry Kliewer*** *began as pastor of Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., on Aug. 15.*

Len Siemens, *also a 1994 AMBS graduate, is the son of Ruben and Tina Siemens of Rosthern, Sask., (not Robert and Tina Siemens as the summer* AMBS Window *reported).*

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46517-1999
Telephone 219 295-3726

News

DGS hashes out giving patterns, declining budgets

Elkhart, Ind. (GCMC)—Members of the Division of General Services (DGS) of the General Conference Mennonite Church expressed concern about the continued decline in giving and looked for ways to remedy the problem when they met at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary here Nov. 6-7.

Ted Stuckey, business manager and treasurer, noted that donations through the end of October showed that giving lagged $37,000 behind the amount given during the same time period in 1993. The General Conference has substantially reduced its program budgets due to the decline: In the last two years, about $500,000 has been cut.

Members observed that economic conditions in the United States and Canada most likely played a role in the giving patterns. James Harder, North Newton, Kan., noted that the median income in the United States is down $700 this year and that this is the fourth straight year the median income has declined.

'We need to teach people the grace of giving.'
Gladys Graber

Rick Braun-Janzen, Abbotsford, B.C., noted that Canadian purchasing power is still not up to 1988 levels, and as a result consumer confidence is down.

Planned giving director Gary Franz urged DGS to think of new ways to slow the downward trend. "We cannot direct the wind, but we can direct the sails," he said.

"Let's hire two more fund-raisers ... and we'll get our money," said Allen Yoder Jr., Middlebury, Ind.

"I am not opposed to another fund-raiser, but I don't know if the 'product' has salability, at least to my age group [under 40]," said Braun-Janzen.

Gladys Graber, Newton, Kan., said, "We need to teach people the grace of giving. We don't want to give the message that they should give only when tapped on the shoulder."

Franz suggested that if another fund-raiser were hired, that person's job description could include developing relationships with congregations.

DGS approved a recommendation to the General Board that asks the General Conference to hire another fund-raiser to work with churches and major donors. The General Board will vote on this recommendation by mail in the next month.

DGS also affirmed that stewardship education should continue to be a high priority.

Restructuring: DGS also discussed the two General Board proposals for restructuring the General Conference. One recommends a shift from three commissions to two—resource and mission. The other recommends the formation of a U.S. conference parallel to the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Braun-Janzen thought that Mennonites in British Columbia would be in favor of a proposal for "fewer levels of conference to relate to. But they would be against combining the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) and the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) into a mission commission. My church wants home ministries to be local."

"That would be typical of many congregations," agreed Delp. He added that the proposals could potentially affect the results of the vote at Wichita '95 on integration of the General Conference (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC).

"If we make the water muddier, we could really change the process. People might just throw up their hands," he said.

Graber agreed: "People hear things through a filter. Change does not enhance confidence."

Harder cautioned, "If we don't integrate and we don't restructure, we could be in trouble financially."

DGS approved a motion that recommends the following: that the General Board postpone its decision on the two restructuring proposals [until after Wichita '95] and that the integration discussion should include the U.S. GCs and MCs as well as the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Continued on next page

Inside the news

Hong Kong Christians face unknown in 1997 / p. 14

Signs of hope in Southern Africa / p. 16

The Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Ind.) board of directors charted the course for a new Doctor of Ministry program during meetings Oct. 27-29 in Elkhart. Board members reviewed a proposal that AMBS begin work to start the program and gave approval for the next development steps. The proposal grows out of several years of study, including two major surveys of Mennonite church leaders and pastors in the area surrounding AMBS. Approval by the board at this meeting sets in motion further testing of the program and projections of cost. The timetable calls for additional board review and action in spring 1995.

• • •

A Goshen, Ind., physician has found ways to blend health care and community development. James Nelson Gingerich is a family physician and director of the Maple City Health Care Center, located in a former fire station in the north part of Goshen, in a neighborhood with many low-income residents. The center is community oriented, removing barriers of language, culture and finances that often keep working poor from receiving care. It provides a variety of services, including prenatal care, home visits to pregnant women, support groups and counseling for survivors of sexual abuse, and smoking cessation programs. Gingerich says the center works to create a healthy community. The primary focus, he says, "is health care and community development, which I think of as a way of expanding the invitation to belong and participate to everyone in the community." Gingerich was Theological Center Guest at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., Oct. 24-28. "As physicians, we feel we're walking in the way of Jesus, the great physician," he says.

St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship celebrated its 10th anniversary Nov. 6. A quilted banner was hung in the fellowship's host church. "Stitching the quilt was an active way of believing in God's creative and re-creative powers," said pastor Helen Wells Quintela.

• • •

Willy Friesen, a former player for the Philadelphia Flyers hockey team, spoke to Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute students Nov. 9. Friesen, a graduate of SCBI, gave up hockey after deciding that the way he was forced to play was incompatible with a Christian lifestyle of nonresistance. Friesen asked SCBI students to consider whether Christians should be involved in violent sports. He said he has lost little of his competitive nature but feels the responsibility to lead a Christian way of life.

• • •

As Republicans gained their first U.S. congressional majority in 40 years, they also gained a majority in "Mennonite" districts. In the 50 U.S. districts with large Mennonite populations, Republicans took seven seats formerly held by Democrats. Before the election, Republicans and Democrats evenly split these 50 districts. Now Republicans hold a 32 to 18 advantage in districts with large Mennonite communities. In the 10 largest Mennonite strongholds, Republicans increased their advantage to 9 to 1 from 7 to 3. Here, only one Democrat, Tim Roemer, who represents northern Indiana (Elkhart and Goshen), survived. Democrats formerly had represented the Newton/Hesston, Kan., area as well as Montgomery County in southeast Pennsylvania. Republicans picked up both these districts. The largest "Mennonite" district, covering most of Lancaster County, Pa., remained firmly Republican. Besides not losing any seats they held, Republicans picked up seats in northeast Indiana (Shipshewana/Berne), northwest Oregon, southwest Indiana, eastern Ohio (Sugarcreek/Millersburg) and central California (Fresno/Reedley).

DGS also heard reports from the communications staff. Communications director Dave Linscheid noted he has received affirmation from churches for the General Conference bulletin inserts, which replaced *Being in Touch. Carla Reimer*

Uncertain future awaits churches in Hong Kong

Hong Kong (Meetinghouse)—One cannot do or say anything here these days without an eye to 1997. That includes decision making by three Mennonite churches in this small country on the southern border of the People's Republic of China.

In 1997 Hong Kong is scheduled to go back to control by mainland China after being a British protectorate for 99 years. Mistrust of China's Communist government in Hong Kong's political, economic and religious sectors is leading to mass migrations.

"You have to remember that almost 50 percent of the Hong Kong population were refugees from China—or children of refugees," says Mennonite missionary Timothy Sprunger in explaining the exodus. Having escaped the Communist government of China in the 1950s or '60s, they are not about to live under this system again.

While one in eight people is expected to leave Hong Kong before 1997, the statistic is that one in four Christians will emigrate. Many will join relatives already in Europe or North America.

Among these are Mennonites. One of Hong Kong's Mennonite congregations will lose 12 of its 70 members next year, the pastor reports. Among them are some of the congregation's elders and other leaders.

"Mennonite history is filled with migrations," says Hugh Sprunger, veteran missionary to Taiwan currently working in Hong Kong. This is what he tells people who ask him whether they should leave. But he also tells stories of others in history who stayed and lived with the new realities.

"I can't tell people what to do," Hugh Sprunger says. "But I do tell them, 'As long as you live in Hong Kong, give your best to the church.'"

One Chinese Mennonite leader, however, believes 1997 can be a corrective. He says Hong Kong's Christians have forgotten about the poor in their move to become wealthy and respectable. "1997 reminds us God is in charge," he says.

J. Lorne Peachey

Planning to stay: *George Veith of Saskatoon (left) and Tim Sprunger of Berne, Ind., meet with Hong Kong missionaries and Chinese pastors. Veith and Sprunger are General Conference missionaries in Hong Kong.*

Although Christians make up only 9 percent of Hong Kong's population, they run up to 70 percent of the welfare institutions, 40 percent of the schools and 20 percent of the hospitals. They have only been able to do this with massive support from the government and business.

Kwok Nai Wang of the Hong Kong Christian Institute charges that this collusion of church, government and the wealthy has divorced Christians from social concerns such as helping the poor. In his writings he describes 1997 as a possible "kairos moment" to bring the church back to its true purpose.

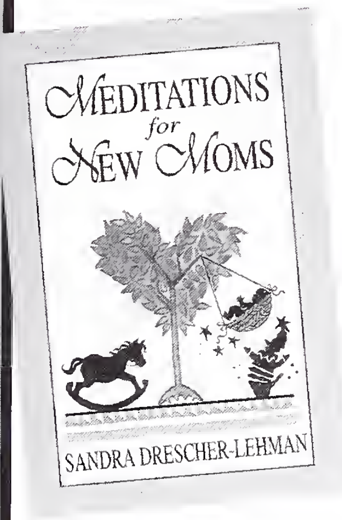
Mennonite mission workers have agreed they will try to stay after 1997. Mennonite work in Hong Kong is currently a joint project of the Commission on Overseas Mission (General Conference Mennonite Church) and Eastern Mennonite Missions (Mennonite Church).

An example of their commitment was a recent decision to purchase property in the city.

"When we worked with the banker, he asked how long my family was staying," Tim Sprunger reports. "I said, 'At least four years.' He seemed

Continued on page 16

For Every Mom!



Meditations for New Moms

by Sandra Drescher-Lehman

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Sandra Drescher-Lehman, in her disarmingly forthright way, gives language to the eternally long hours of being with babies, the holy moments that change exhaustion to exhilaration, the private fears, that sudden gratitude for one's own mother.

Drescher-Lehman's own hands and heart are deep in this subject. She is a writer mom to two pre-schoolers. Her voice is gritty, yet grateful. Her moods move through the range all mothers know. She brings comfort. She lends identification to this most basic, yet most personal experience.

Each meditation is brief. Each suggests an idea or exercise that a preoccupied mom can carry throughout her day. Delightful. Supportive. Encouraging.

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The Best of Mennonite Fellowship Meals

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This practical, easy-to-use cookbook is full of recipes which may be made without elaborate preparation. It contains ideas for finger foods, one-dish meals, health-conscious cooks, cross-cultural dishes, and small recipes for entertaining at home, as well as a few recipes large enough to serve several hundred people. All from the kitchens of a people known for their delectable cooking.

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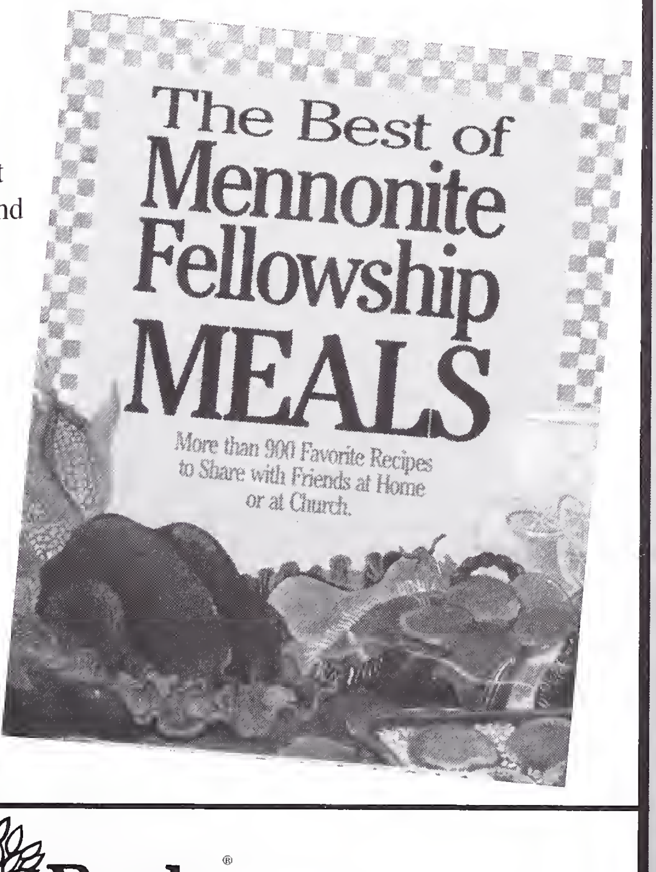

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Over the next four years, Bluffton (Ohio) College will study student values: those they enter with, those they leave with and those they hold a few years after graduation. The study is part of a collaborative assessment project coordinated by the Christian College Coalition and funded by a $222,000 grant from the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education. The study includes 20 colleges.

• • •

A Colombian military court has issued a warrant for 18-year-old Luis Gabriel Caldas Leon, the first conscientious objector to challenge through law the obligatory military service requirement in violence-plagued Colombia. Luis Gabriel is now subject to a military trial and faces imprisonment for up to two years. While the Colombian constitution states that "no one will be obligated to act against their conscience," courts have argued that the right is outweighed by the needs of the Colombian military.

• • •

The Smithsonian Institution has bowed to pressure from the American Legion and other veterans groups, compromising its coming exhibition on the atomic bombing of Japan. In a letter to *The New York Times*, Jo Becker, executive director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, writes, "These changes present the bombing, a unique event in history, as a justified military response to Japanese aggression ... and gloss over the devastation brought on Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a result of United States actions." FOR and other peace groups urged the institution to include "the human face" of Japanese who died and to appraise the political motivations for using the bomb as well as an exploration of the bomb's legacy, including the nuclear arms race, radiation poisoning and environmental contamination from nuclear weapons testing.

surprised and said, 'Oh, that's beyond 1997.'"

The joint mission effort has contingency plans should things get rough for mission workers under the new government. Women and children will leave, with men staying behind.

"We'll wait until the church tells us it's time to leave," Tim Sprunger says.

Mennonite missionaries report that this kind of local church decision making is one of their primary goals. Toward this end they have been successful in finding a Chinese pastor to work with them in each of the three congregations.

Total Mennonite church membership in Hong Kong numbers approximately 125. *J. Lorne Peachey*

Southern Africa looks hopeful

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—In Southern Africa, once known for civil wars and heavy-handed dictators, people are rejecting conflict and one-party rule and looking toward a better future. Democracies now exist in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Malawi and Zambia. Angola may soon join this group.

Arli Klassen, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Africa interim co-secretary, notes churches have played a key role in these changes. In Mozambique church leaders helped mediate an end to a 16-year civil war. In South Africa the church took the lead in opposing apartheid. In many Southern African countries, churches educated people about democracy and monitored elections.

Signs of hope for the region include

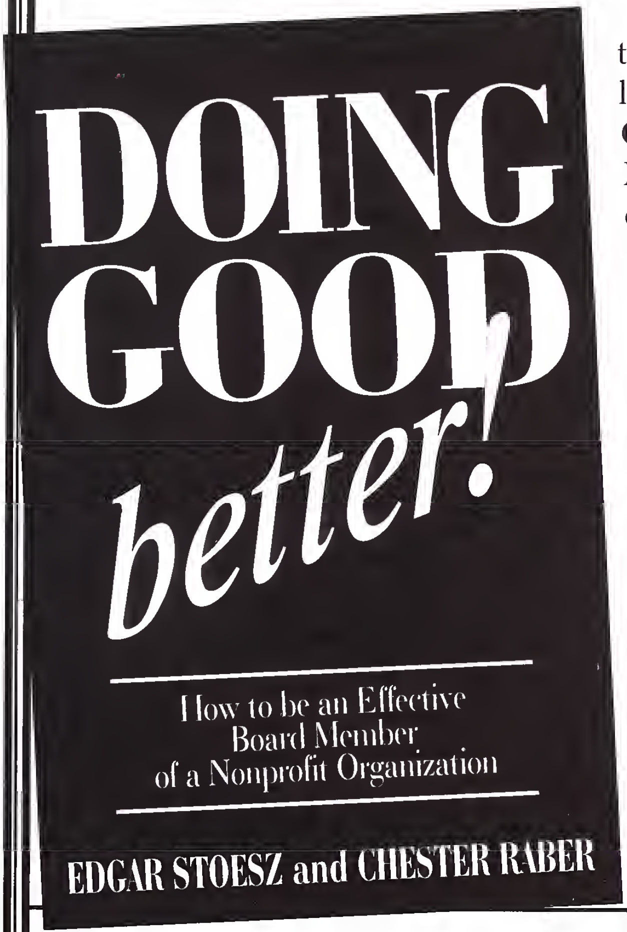
- elections held in Lesotho in March 1993. Klassen, who helped monitor the elections, said people walked 10 to 20 kilometers (6 to 12 miles) to vote.
- elections held in Mozambique in October 1994. MCC workers who helped drive monitors to the polls observed joyous voters, including one woman who danced her way through the voting process. Millions of Mozambican refugees have returned home during the past year.
- elections held in South Africa in April 1994. Many black South Africans once persecuted by the former government now hold government posts. Among these is Ezra Sigwela, a provincial minister, who spent several years in North American Mennonite communities during the 1980s.
- a tenuous truce in Angola between government and rebel leaders locked in a 20-year civil war. MCC workers hope they can soon move from supplying relief food to helping Angolans rebuild their devastated country.

"Southern Africans have much to look forward to. However, times of transition can also be very stressful," says Klassen. "I urge the MCC constituency to remember Southern Africans in their prayers." *Pearl Sensenig*

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Teach your children well: *A teacher leads students in a song in a Botswana classroom. Over the past years Botswana has made great strides in education. Free education is now offered to all children through the end of form two, the equivalent of grades 8 and 9.*

Could your Board be better?



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Executive Director, Support Center of Washington

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by Edgar Stoesz & Chester Raber

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Record

CPT—Christian Peacemaker Teams
MCEC—Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service

Although Elfrieda Dyck is still quite weak, she is getting stronger and continues to regain movement in her right side. Dyck, 77, suffered a serious stroke in the brain stem on Nov. 3. She and her husband, Peter Dyck, were two months into a storytelling tour across Canada and the United States in commemoration of Mennonite Central Committee's 75th anniversary. Doctors remain cautious about giving a prognosis, says the couple's daughter, Rebecca Dyck.

• • •

The board of Mennonite Health Services at their meetings Oct. 8 approved a plan to build a stronger network. Every Mennonite and Brethren in Christ health and human service institution in the United States will be invited to join MHS at one of three levels. "Partners" will receive every MHS service and participate in joint ventures such as the MHS Medical Expense Plan. "Affiliates" will use the MHS network for management services, strategic advice and information. "Associates" will receive discounts to attend the annual Mennonite health assembly. MHS currently has 16 members.

• • •

On Nov. 2 a Cuban-American terrorist group tried to burn down a warehouse loaded with 25 tons of medicine, medical equipment and food destined for churches in Cuba. Acting on a tip, police were waiting at a Miami warehouse as four men broke a window and poured 25 gallons of gas into the building. Three men were taken into custody. The warehouse contents were the result of a Pastors for Peace-sponsored caravan, scheduled to depart from Miami Nov. 6. "There is really no difference between this attempted arson and [President] Clinton's embargo," said Rev. Lucius Walker, leader of the caravan. "The intent of both is to prevent medicine and food from reaching people in need in Cuba."

DEATHS

Anna Baerg, 77, died Nov. 2 in Mountain Lake, Minn. She had served as a General Conference missionary with the Northern Cheyenne in Montana, the Hopi in Arizona and with several Indian tribes in Denver.

MINISTERS

Ryan Ahlgrim has resigned as pastor at Peoria (Ill.) North Church effective April 1995. He will become pastor of First Church, Indianapolis, in early May 1995.

Ardys and **Palmer Becker** began as pastors at Calvary Church, Aurora, Ore., Nov. 15.

Arthur Byer is interim pastor at Zion Church, Elmira, Ont.

Bob Coon is the transition administrator at Topeka (Ind.) Church.

Susan Eash is quarter-time youth director at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan. She is also a member of the MVS unit there (see Workers).

Julie Ellison is assistant pastor at Tavistock (Ont.) Church.

Jean Lehn Epp began in August as pastor of Mississauga (Ont.) Fellowship.

Brent Foster was installed as co-pastor of Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., July 24.

Reynold Friesen is assistant pastor at Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church.

Daniel Genest is pastor of Rouyn-Noranda, LaSarre and Val D'Or churches, all in Quebec.

Dwayn Isaac is pastor at First Church, Clinton, Okla.

Darrel Jantzi is pastor at Bethel Church, Elora, Ont.

George and **Martha Janzen** are pastors at First Church, Calgary.

Peter Janzen is interim pastor at Bethel Church, Winnipeg.

Garry and **Gloria Jost** were licensed and installed Oct. 2 as pastors at Pacific Covenant Mennonite Church, Canby, Ore.

Richard Kinson will begin as pastor at Grace Church, Enid, Okla., Dec. 15.

Gary Martin is interim pastor at First Church, Nappanee, Ind.

Ernest W. Neufeld has resigned as pastor at Faith Church, Fargo-Moorhead, N.D. He will be interim pastor at Jubilee Church, Meridian, Miss., beginning Jan. 15, 1995.

Jeff Nickel is youth pastor at Emmanuel Church, Clearbrook, B.C.

Jim Reusser is interim pastor at Crosshill Church, Millbank, Ont.

Adam Robinson is youth pastor at Foothills Church, Calgary.

Herb Schultz is pastor at Steinmann Church, Baden, Ont.

Peggy Tiessen is youth pastor at Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church.

John Toews is associate pastor at Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church.

John Unrau is associate pastor at Eben-Ezer Church, Clearbrook, B.C.

Doris Weber is interim pastor at Mannheim Church, Kitchener, Ont.

George Wiebe began a part-time position in music ministry at Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church Sept. 11.

Chris Wright was installed as pastor at Boynton Church, Hopedale, Ill., on July 31.

R. Bergen

Bergman

Braun

Clymer

Eash

Foss

WORKERS

Peter Begly, Plow Creek Fellowship, Tiskilwa, Ill., left Oct. 19 for a two-month CPT term in Haiti.

Ilene Bergen, Valleyview Church, London, Ont., is Christian education minister for MCEC.

Ruthy Bergen, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, began a two-year MVS term Oct. 3 as a teacher's aide at Associated Youth Services, Kansas City, Kan.

Vanessa Bergman, Denver, began a one-year MVS term Sept. 18 as a programs/administrative assistant at Casa De Esperanza in St. Paul, Minn.

Kurt Braun, Bergthaler Church, Morden, Man., began a two-year MVS term Sept. 7 in Cincinnati. He is working with housing repair with Sign of the Cross.

Cynthia Clymer, Lancaster, Pa., began a one-year MVS term Aug. 22 as a homework program assistant with Peaslee Neighborhood Center in Cincinnati.

Lucinda Douglas is Bible instructor and campus pastor at Freeman (S.D.) Academy.

Susan Eash, Topeka (Ind.) Church, began a two-year MVS term Sept. 1 as an accountant and bookkeeper for Interfaith Housing, Hutchinson, Kan.

Duane Ediger, Peace Church, Dallas, Texas, left Oct. 19 for a two-month CPT term in Haiti.

Erik Foss, Dothan, Ala., began an 18-month MVS term Oct. 1 as a counselor for Hope House in San Francisco.

Laura Gerber, Whitestone Church, Hesston, Kan., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 at the Government Accountability Project in Seattle.

Mark Diller Harder is serving as student and young adult minister for MCEC.

Brenda and **Fritz Harms** are coaching soccer at Freeman (S.D.) Academy.

Jason Hill, Wellington, Kan., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 16 as a recreation specialist at Erie House in Chicago.

Tara Hofer is Spanish instructor at Freeman (S.D.) Academy.

Kristen Hoober, Belmont Church, Elkhart, Ind., began a one-year MVS term Oct. 20 as a teacher's aide at El Hogar in Chicago.

Mandy Horak, Upland, Calif., began a one-year MVS term Oct. 24 as an assistant manager at the Jubilee Shop, St. Paul, Minn.

Suzanne Horner is Bible instructor at Freeman (S.D.) Academy.

Robert Hull has completed work as secretary for peace and justice for the General Conference Mennonite Church. He had been in the position since 1979.

Joanne Jackson, Grand Junction, Colo., began a nine-month MVS term Sept. 29 as a seventh-grade teacher at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

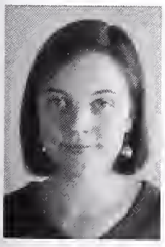
John and **Reinhild Janzen**, Zion Church, Elbing, Kan., have begun a six-week Mennonite Central Committee term at the Bukavu refugee camp in Zaire, working with Rwandan refugees.

Hilda Letkeman, Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church, began a one-year MVS term Aug. 22 as a teacher's assistant at the Friendship Day Care, Hutchinson, Kan.

Johanna MacAllister, Marshfield, Mass., began a one-year MVS term Oct. 24 as a caseworker with the Big Brothers Association in Saskatoon.

Cynthia Madden, Rockford, Ill., began a two-year MVS term Oct. 24 as an education specialist at Hope Communities in Denver.

Shannon Neufeldt, Peace Church, Regina, Sask., began a


Gerber

Hill

Hoober

Horak

Jackson

Letkeman

MacAllister

Madden

The proposed New York Anabaptist and Peace Library has been chosen as the domestic project for the Mennonite Church's "Christmas Sharing Fund." A potential $15,000 will go to place books at Menno House, a hospitality house sponsored by Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship.

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"Unity Amidst Diversity: Mennonite Central Committee and the 20th-Century North American Mennonite Experience" is a conference being planned as part of MCC's 75th-anniversary year commemorations. The conference will be held March 9-12, 1995, at Fresno Pacific College and Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif. For information, contact West Coast MCC, 1010 G Street, Reedley, CA 93654, (209) 638-6911.

• • •

Two film festivals have given awards to *The Innocent*, a 1994 Mennonite Central Committee video that explores the question of responsibility for the violence and suffering caused by war. The film won the Golden Eagle Award at the Council for International Nontheatrical Events (CINE) and the Silver Award at the Chicago Film Festival. The Golden Eagle Award is the highest award that a nontheatrical piece can receive in the United States. The film is based on the true story of a Laotian woman killed by a bomb that was lying in her garden eight years after the Vietnam War. The drama takes place in a courtroom where a judge must determine who is responsible for the woman's death. The 23-minute video comes with a discussion guide. It is available on loan from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, phone (717) 859-1151; MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, phone (204) 261-6381; or the MCC office nearest you. It can be purchased from the Akron office.

Bethesda Church, Marion, S.D., voted Oct. 19 to withdraw from Northern District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church and from General Conference. They gave no specific reason other than that they don't agree with General Conference. The church cited Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together unless they be agreed?"

• • •

Two Ohio churches, one from the General Conference Mennonite Church and one from the Mennonite Church, are merging. First Mennonite Church (GC), Lima, and Northside Mennonite Church (MC), also in Lima, will merge Jan. 8, 1995, under the name Lima Mennonite Church. The new church will be affiliated with both the General Conference and the Mennonite Church.

• • •

Oswald Goering received the Humanitarian Service Award from Heifer Project International at the organization's 50th anniversary banquet Oct. 8 in Little Rock, Ark. Goering, a member of Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., was cited for his role in raising $50,000 through his local Rotary Club district to fund a project in Poland. Since 1992, 164 Polish farmers have received Simmental-bred heifers and cows, and another 46 are to be sent by the end of the year. More recently, Goering wrote a proposal to raise $125,000 to start a similar project in the Ukraine. He and his wife, Elaine, recently returned from a five-week trip to the Ukraine, Russia, Poland and Germany. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

two-year MVS term Aug. 29 as a pastoral assistant at Welcome Inn, Hamilton, Ont.

Shannon Neiford, Convoy, Ohio, began a two-year MVS term Aug. 8 as a teacher at St. Phillips school in Dallas.

Jeanne Pahls, Cincinnati, began a one-year MVS term Aug. 19 as a first-grade teacher at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Dietrich and **Dorothy Rempel**, Eden Church, Chilliwack, B.C., will begin work in Berlin with Aussiedler in January 1995, sponsored by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Barb Schrag, First Church, Pretty Praire, Kan., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 17 as a health educator in Chicago.

Susan Schwartzentruber, Tavistock (Ont.) Church, began a two-year MVS term Sept. 2 as a social worker at a children's center in St. Louis.

Michael Thiessen, Home Street Church, Winnipeg, began a two-year MVS term Oct. 24 at the Mental Health Association in Wichita, Kan.

Mary Wells, Cincinnati (Ohio) Fellowship, left Oct. 19 for a one-month CPT term in Haiti.

Rudolph Wiens Etobicoke, Mississauga (Ont.) Fellowship, left Oct. 19 for a 10-day CPT term in Haiti.

Philip Wiebe will begin as editor of *Rejoice!* Jan. 1, 1995, replacing **Katie Funk Wiebe**.

Ken Wright is business and computer teacher and basketball coach at Freeman (S.D.) Academy.

Neufeldt

Neiford

Pahls

Schrag

Schwartzentruber

Thiessen

Wiebe

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., announces an opening for **director of admissions** (recruitment) to be filled no later than July 1, 1995, earlier if possible. The position will be full time. Applicants should be from the General Conference Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church. Preference for applicants with a seminary degree and familiarity with both GC and MC constituencies. Job description available on request.

Those interested in the position should send a letter of application, résumé and references by Dec. 15 to **Richard A. Kauffman, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517-1999; (219) 296-6244, fax (219) 295-0092.**

Appropriate technology

Akron, Pa. (MCC)— Simple machines used by Third World people are now teaching North Americans about the resourcefulness of people with few material resources.

Four traveling displays of "appropriate technology"—devices that can be maintained and manufactured by people in "low-tech" settings—are traveling the United States. The displays focus on the themes: "peanuts," "water," "grains" and "family living." MCC Canada is preparing three similar displays.

To use the displays, contact your regional or provincial MCC office.

Get a handle: *A youngster experiments with a rope pump at the Virginia MCC Relief Sale, Sept. 23-24, in Fishersville, Va.*

Jim Bishop

Winter conferences for business professionals and entrepreneurs will be held in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Feb. 3-4, 1995, and Phoenix March 16-20, 1995. The General Conference Mennonite Church is sponsoring the events, which include fellowship, learning, golf and food! You'll learn to know how others in business handle success and problems. Participants will share how a relationship with the church can help in business and how your leadership can enhance your church and conference.

Call or write **Gary Franz** for a brochure: **(316) 283-5100** or **General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347**.

Eastern Mennonite University has an opening for **director of admissions—seminary and graduate programs**. 12-month, full-time position, beginning June 19, 1995. The qualified candidate will possess a master's degree, experience in administration, public relations, admissions and recruitment. Must be a Christian, committed to EMU philosophy, have the ability to counsel prospective students regarding study, be creative and able to communicate effectively. There are no special physical requirements. Minorities especially encouraged to apply.

Apply by **Jan. 31, 1995**, to **EMU Human Resources Office, (703) 432-4108.**

Mennonite Collegiate Institute invites applications for the position of **principal**. MCI, a 150-student residential church school in Gretna, Man., offers a senior 1-4 (grades 9-12) program. In its second century of excellence, MCI is noted for its strong academic/Bible curriculum, fine music/drama programs and challenging athletic opportunities.

The principal oversees day-to-day operations of MCI, and is responsible to the board of directors. Applicants are expected to support MCI's mission statement, hold a valid teaching certificate and possess strong public relations skills. Administrative experience and a background in theology would be definite assets. The candidate should have a strong commitment to Christ within an Anabaptist/Mennonite orientation. Duties will begin July 1995.

Send résumé and three references **by Jan. 15, 1995**, to **Principal Search Committee, Box 313, Gretna, MB R0G 0V0.**

Bluffton College Department of Family and Consumer Sciences seeks a **dietetics program director** and **assistant/associate professor of food, nutrition and dietetics**. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate nutrition courses in ADA-approved didactic program in dietetics, program director for DPD program, advise students, supervise clinical experience, participate in committee work, professional organizations and dietetic program development. Successful candidates hold an advanced degree in nutrition, dietetics, nutritional biochemistry, or closely related field; PhD preferred. RD, LD clinical experience required, along with successful teaching experience and demonstrated ability for scholarly research. Full-time, tenure-track position begins March 1 or Sept. 1, 1995. Review of applications begins Jan. 17, 1995, until appointment is made. Class presentation required of all applicants invited to interview.

Submit letter of application, résumé or vita, three letters of reference and unofficial transcripts to **Donald L. Pannabecker, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817.** Equal Opportunity Employer

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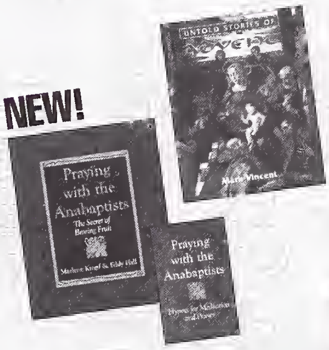
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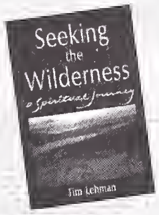

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Reviews

MUSIC

FOLK PROPHET

Tom Prasada-Rao, **The Way of the World** *(1994, Ahimsa Acoustics) and* **Incoming** *(1992, Crossroads)*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

Prasada-Rao's spirit shows through every note he writes and sings. In a world where "Christian artist" is viewed as an oxymoron, he creates convicted music that confronts ambiguities with honesty.

His musical taste is eclectic but centers around a gospel- and soul-infused folk sound. The two albums show two sides of a singer-songwriter whose commitment to peace inspires music that condemns politics as usual and points to a better way.

Prasada-Rao doesn't bill himself as a Christian artist, but neither does he downplay his convictions. His decision to be faithful to his spiritual and his musical convictions may cost him professionally. That decision may keep him from a secular audience that disdains the spiritual and from a Christian audience that shies away from sounds outside the mainstream.

He knows the story. He sings of it in "I Got a Feeling": "Well my agent said / that God is dead / and he should know it. / And that nothing sells / like hate and hell, / and he shows it. / Me I'm not that sure / of the way things were / or how it's going to work out, / but I got a feeling."

Produced by Mark Heard, *Incoming* shows Prasada-Rao in a studio setting. The album is an example of cooperative effort among musicians. The team fills out each song with creative arranging and instrumentation that includes conga, bongo, bells, shaker, caxixi, stick, accordion, organ, udu, doumbec, kalimba, whistle, triangle, tabla, pandiero and bendir. Prasada-Rao shows his versatility, contributing mandolin, recorders, violin and piano, as well as his precise guitar work and melodious voice.

His voice is prophetic—naming both the sins and inconsistencies of society and the remedies. He describes himself in the title cut: "Got a chip on my shoulder / and a couple in my pockets / from some white house marine / turning bread into rockets. … I'm riding this train / holding on to my candle / like a voice in the dark / saying heed my warning / while some p.r. machine / tells America it's morning."

Wendy Rubin

Convicted, honest music: *Prasada-Rao*

Two years later, *The Way of the World* finds Prasada-Rao playing folk festivals and opening up his sound. Where *Incoming* is a group effort with more of a subtle but solid rock beat, *World*, featuring several live tracks, puts Prasada-Rao in a folk solo spotlight. Where most musicians find that a pared-down acoustic set brings out their mellower side, Prasada-Rao seems to draw more raw energy into the unplugged sound. He has clearly paid his dues in live settings. But the album retains an acoustic warmth. The predominance of his acoustic playing, often in open guitar tunings, gives the album a woody sound that supports Rao's rich voice.

The intimacy of *World* shines on "Ashes of Love", a tribute to homeless activist Mitch Snyder, who after years of radical activism in Washington for America's homeless, took his life 2 1/2 years ago. Prasada-Rao has a close association with the Washington activist crowd and has done benefits for the Community for Creative Non-Violence, where Snyder lived and worked. Where the media focused on the tragedy of Snyder's death, Prasada-Rao lifts up the beauty of Snyder's spirit. Introducing the song, Prasada-Rao writes of Snyder, "who, before he burned out, burned brighter than most of us ever will."

Prasada-Rao's music proves that often the best music never reaches the mass market. Like the spiritual insights he sings about, Prasada-Rao's music needs to be sought out. It's worth the search.

Both albums are available from Ahimsa Acoustics, P.O. Box 5734, Takoma Park, MD 20913-5734. CDs are $15 U.S., cassettes $10 U.S. Add $1.50 for postage and handling.

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Vienna: Music & Culture	May 30 - June 13	Wilbur Maust
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European PAX	July 10-26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes
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BOOKS

ANABAPTIST PATH TO PRAYER

Praying with the Anabaptists: The Secret of Bearing Fruit *by Marlene Kropf and Eddy Hall (Faith & Life Press, 1994, 176 pages, accompanying cassette)*

Reviewed by Karla Morton, Harleysville, Pa.

Praying with the Anabaptists is the first of what I hope will be a series of books that delve into Anabaptist spirituality. Marlene Kropf and Eddy Hall have put forth a helpful book that begins to discover the roots of Anabaptist spirituality. It is clear, when one reads the early Anabaptists, that a deep devotional and spiritual life was the basis for the Radical Reformation. Kropf and Hall just begin to scratch the surface of the spirituality that sustained the early Anabaptists. Thus, I hope we will see more works like this.

Praying with the Anabaptists is divided into three sections, with five devotions in each section. The Scripture used as a basis for the book is from John 13-17 (selected passages) that emphasize our life in Christ. The devotions consider the Scripture in light of today's world, look at how the early Anabaptists may have interpreted the Scripture, offer a guided prayer exercise and offer "martyrs' prayers," taken from writings of early Anabaptists. The devotions begin in an introductory way, so that one need not feel intimidated or afraid to try a new direction. At times the steps to prayer feel a little too stilted, but for those experiencing these types of exercises for the first time, the guidance is helpful. I believe Kropf and Hall provide these guided prayers as a starting point, with the hope that people will discover a deepened desire to "be" with God.

A relationship with God through prayer does not "just happen." We must take time to cultivate our souls so that our roots will grow in the soil of God's being. Kropf and Hall underscore this: "Waiting beside a railroad track doesn't cause a train to come, but if you wait long enough, one will come. In the same way, you cannot force the Holy Spirit to speak to you through Scripture, but you can make a habit of listening so that when the Spirit speaks, you hear." This is what I see as the guiding principle of *Praying with the Anabaptists*: providing a place to step out into the spiritual, seeking Jesus' way in today's world, using Scripture and the voices of Anabaptist martyrs as our compass.

An accompanying audiocassette provides hymns (from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*) in a mix of musical styles for those who use music in their times of prayer. The Eastern Mennonite University Singers and assorted musicians provide segues for the guided prayer exercises.

For those who desire to grow in their relationship with God, *Praying with the Anabaptists* renders a fresh voice of experience to enable growth to take place.

Resources

- **Jonas and Sally** by Rich Foss (Good Books, 1994, $19.95 U.S. hardcover) is a novel exploring the story of two young people as they come to love each other and deal with the memories of Sally's past abuse.
- **Meditations for New Moms** by Sandra Drescher-Lehman (Good Books, 1994, $7.95 U.S.) provides brief meditations on motherhood.
- **Walking Together in Faith: The Central District Conference 1957-1990,** edited by Elaine Sommers Rich (Central District Conference, 1993, $24.95 U.S. paperback; $29.95 U.S. hardcover) chronicles the newer congregations and mission efforts of CDC.
- **One Voice** is a 72-minute CD of performance selections from Bluffton (Ohio) College's Camerata Singers. Order from Bluffton College Music Department, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817; $15 U.S.
- **The Festival Cookbook: Four Seasons of Favorites** by Phyllis Pellman Good (Good Books, 1994, $13.95 U.S.) offers more than 300 recipes organized around the four seasons of the year.
- **Amos and Abraham** by Sharyn Bellafiore (Good Books, 1994, $14.95 U.S.) is a children's story about the friendship of two boys: one Amish and one a Hasidic Jew.
- **Amish Women: Lives and Stories** by Louise Stoltzfus (Good Books, 1994, $14.95 U.S.) examines what it means to be a woman and Amish through conversations and interviews with Amish women.
- **Growing Up Plain** by Shirley Kurtz (Good Books, 1994, $9.95 U.S.) is a witty account of the author's growing up "plain."
- **Self-Help Crafts catalog** offers mail-order handicrafts made by Third-World artisans. For a free catalog call (800) 592-7238.
- **"Racism—What do you see?"** is asked in a new poster and brochure from Mennonite Central Committee. To order the free 17-by-24-inch poster and accompanying brochure, contact any MCC office or call (717) 859-1151 (U.S.) or (204) 261-6381 (Canada).
- **Step of Faith** is a 23-minute video about Mennonite Central Committee work in Canada. Available for free rental from all MCC offices.
- **A recording of traditional Mennonite hymns**, sung by the British Columbia West Coast Mennonite Chamber Choir, is being sold to raise funds for MCC Supportive Care Services in B.C. Call (800) 622-5455; CDs are $18.98 (Cdn.), audiocassettes are $13.98 (Cdn.). Shipping and tax extra.
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Packet for 1995** is available; the theme is, "If You Want Peace, You Must Work for Justice." Order prepaid from National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice, 3033 Fourth St. NE, Washington, DC 20017; $12 U.S. includes postage and handling.
- **Tourism: Paradise in Peril** (Office on Global Education, Baltimore) is a study/action guide for people and groups exploring how to travel responsibly. Prepaid orders to Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515-0968; $.30 each or 4/$1 U.S.
- **A Marriage Manual, A Hospital Visitation Manual** and **A Funeral Manual** by Perry H. Biddle Jr. (Eerdmans, $12.99 U.S. each/set for $33.97) are basic tools for pastors.
- **Being Holy Being Human: Dealing with the Incredible Expectations and Pressures of Ministry** by Jay Kesler (Bethany House, 1994, $9.99 U.S.) helps pastors and other church leaders live with the tension of expectations and human frailty.

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Editorial

Make two realities one

Many Christians live in two separate realities. They forget that in the incarnation of Jesus Christ God joined heaven and earth. The division of secular and sacred does not apply. All that we do we are to do to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

In his book *The Monday Connection* (HarperCollins, 1991), William E. Diehl says that "most Christians are unable to bring into the experiences of everyday life the basic elements of the faith they profess on a Sunday morning." Often this is not an intentional division people make between their Sunday reality and their Monday reality. They simply don't know how to bridge that gap.

Diehl writes about what he felt years ago, that there was "no place in my Monday world to talk about faith, and no place in my Sunday world to talk about work." His personal dilemma reflects a broader societal tendency. A growing number of North Americans are searching for spiritual meaning. Gallup Polls show that the vast majority of us, for example, believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and a majority professes a solid Christian commitment, yet the percentage of us who do not attend church is increasing.

Diehl is quick to congratulate Mennonites as having less of a problem with this division of worship and daily life than others. This may be partly true, due to our Anabaptist emphasis on following Jesus in all of life. But he does not know us too well. We also live a kind of split personality.

How many times have we heard a sermon that applies directly to our daily work? How often do we discuss with our fellow Christians the ethical dilemmas or faith questions we face in our work? (By daily work I do not mean simply paid work but what we do, whether that is as an employee, a student, a homemaker or a retired person.)

In a speech he gave at the annual Mennonite Economic Development Associates meeting Nov. 3-6 in South Bend, Ind., Diehl presented five principles in keeping a connection between our faith and our daily work.

1. Competency: He asked, If we were in a plane that was damaged and needed to make an emergency landing, would we be more concerned with whether or not the pilot was a Christian or whether or not he was a competent pilot? Being a faithful Christian in our work means first of all being competent at our work.

2. Presence: Maintaining good personal relationships involves being present with others, i.e. listening to them, taking their needs into account. However, this is not always easy. We are called to be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16). The ministry of presence, he says, involves "risk, good judgment and the assurance of the forgiveness of God."

3. Ethics: Just being a Christian does not guarantee good ethical decisions. Ethics involves the consideration of rights, fairness and justice, but problems are often complex. Diehl is part of a group from his congregation that meets for breakfast on the first Monday of each month to discuss a case brought by one of them from their work. This is one model of applying our Sunday reality to our Monday reality.

4. Change: Bringing about change requires the courage to change and the persistence to keep working at the small things that eventually lead to change. Diehl told about his first day as manager of sales, when he insisted on getting his own coffee (rather than letting his secretary get it). This was new in that company. It may not have been a big deal, but it made a statement about his style of leadership, and before long his example spread to everyone in that department.

5. Lifestyle: Much of our witness to others about our faith happens through how we live. *God and Mammon in America* by Robert Wuthnow (Free Press, 1994) reports a recent study that shows little difference between Christians and the rest of society in terms of how we handle our money, for instance. We proclaim that we are different; we must also live it. Diehl proposes that Christians become "ten-fivers": 10 percent of income for giving and five hours a week given in volunteer work outside the home.

In Jesus, God calls us to be faithful throughout our week. We are to not only confess our faith but live it out as best we can in our daily work. Let us live in one reality, not two. We can do so only by God's grace, which surrounds us every moment. *Gordon Houser*

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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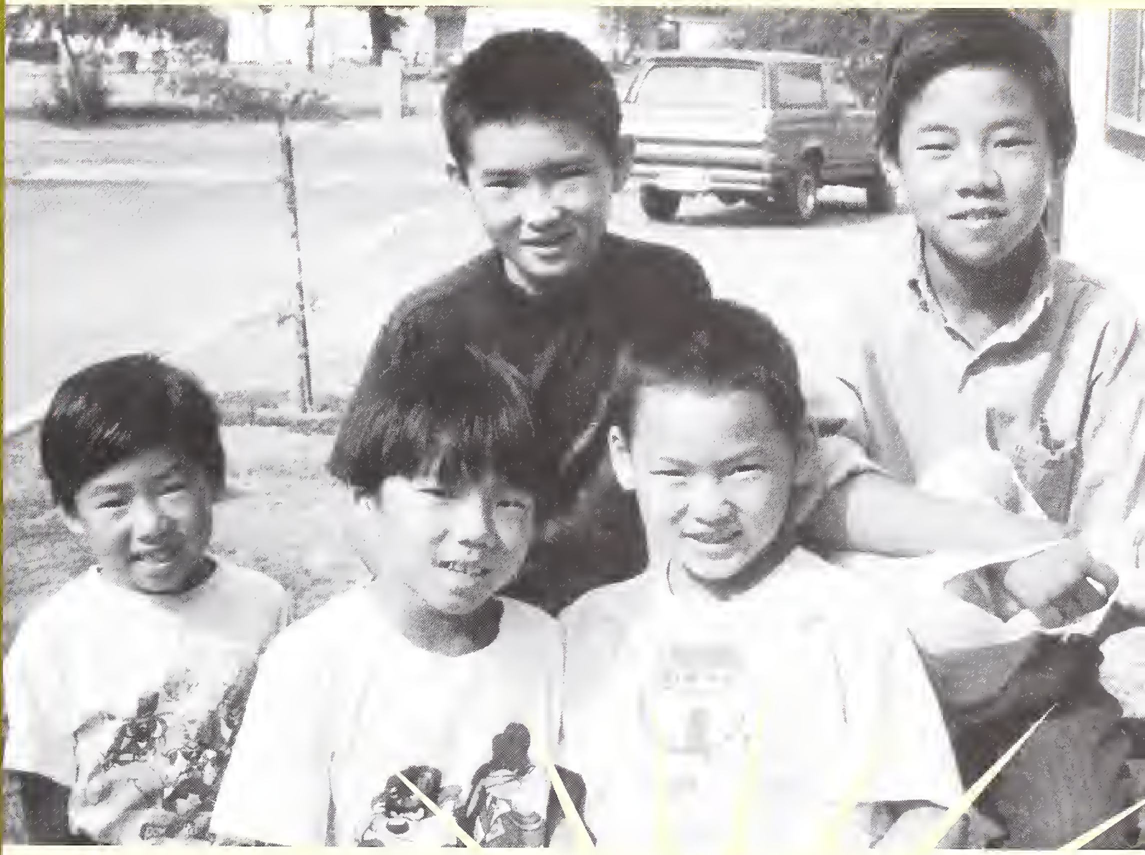
Some of the children who attend Hmong Community Church—Mennonite in Fresno, Calif.



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- Making harmony: from music to mediation (see page 8)

A city on a hill in Fresno

Prologue

One of the goals of *The Mennonite* is to serve as a network for congregations to find out from one another what is going on, what is working and what is not. In this issue you get a glimpse of what's going on among some Mennonite churches in the Fresno, Calif., area.

Believe me, more is happening than we can cover in a few pages. But what you read here can be a source for ideas, for encouragement, for prayer. You will learn about a pastor with vision (page 3), Hispanic church planters (page 5), ministry among Hmong refugees (page 6) and conflict mediation work (page 8).

Mathew Swora begins a two-part Bible study on Revelation 12 (see page 12).

You may want to discuss this issue with your Sunday school class or small group. Ask yourselves what your church is doing to be a city on a hill. What can you learn from the people in Fresno? What can you offer them?

For more information about City on a Hill projects, contact Lois Barrett, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries, at P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100. You may also want to contribute to this and other projects of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Simply write or call the same address.

Our 1994 index will be available, free of charge, sometime after the first of the year. *gh*

Next issue: When it hurts to live

Cover: Photo by Carla Reimer

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General
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Mennonites in the Fresno, Calif., area are planting churches and helping them bloom.

A city on a hill in Fresno

Mennonites in the Fresno, Calif., area are doing everything under the sun to create a healthy climate for church growth. In 1988 there were only two General Conference Mennonite churches in the area. Today there are five churches and plans for at least three more.

"I think everybody needs to hear about the Mennonite approach to faith. Once you develop the right atmosphere, it's easy to start new churches all the time," says Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, who together with Clare Ann, his wife, planted the Peace Community Church—Mennonite in Clovis, Calif.

The Fresno churches support a number of projects, including a job placement program for refugees. Because of this local church activity the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church named the Fresno area as its 1994 City on a Hill project and gave a $20,000 grant to the churches here. (City on a Hill is part of the Abraham and Sarah project, which aims to provide support to existing churches and new ones.) "Through the City on a Hill project, CHM wants to demonstrate how evangelism, peace and service can be a part of the whole gospel," says CHM executive secretary Lois Barrett.

While the church leaders here admit that being fruitful isn't always apparent, they all agree that their work has its own rewards. In the following articles, they share their stories of how they came to hear God's call. *Carla Reimer*

Coasting is not an option

James Wenger shares his vision and pursues it.

Carla Reimer

Take one quick look at James Wenger's life and it is clear he is not joking when he says, "God wants us to be actively engaged, not just coasting."

James is a full-steam-ahead sort of guy. Over the years he has avidly pursued a number of diverse hobbies, from raising trout in his backyard to collecting antique clocks. His most recent venture involves breeding Akita dogs.

He says that once he feels that he has done adequate research for a new hobby, he simply forges ahead: "You have to be flexible. It is not good to be a perfectionist."

Continued on next page

The articles and photos on pages 3-9 are by Carla Reimer, who is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"A congregation that is only thinking about its own needs is a dead-end street."

James Wenger

It is precisely this kind of energy and optimism that James brings to his position as pastor of the Mennonite Community Church in Fresno, Calif.

James says he was encouraged to think big at a Fuller Institute workshop he attended in 1984, about a year after he became a pastor in Fresno. "They talked about how the pastor has a responsibility to lead the church in its vision and goals. Of course, I wanted to see the church make progress," he says.

So the following Sunday he decided to share his vision for Mennonite Community Church in a sermon he delivered. "I told them how I wanted to start a Hmong church and another English-speaking congregation. I said, 'Our congregation can grow,'" he recalls.

"A congregation that is only thinking about its own needs is a dead-end street. God doesn't want us to relate to him through our buildings. God wants us to reach out to other people and their needs," he says.

His sermon surprised many in the congregation. Some were not too sure about the plausibility of the ideas. But that didn't stop James. "I just started living the vision by looking for ways I could accomplish it," he says. And several months later the church decided formally to adopt the goals.

Mennonite Community Church first began to reach out to the Hmong community by making seven plots of land available for gardens on its property. The congregation then started to offer English-as-a-second-language classes. Both projects continue today.

In 1986, when the Lao Evangelical Church inquired about the possibility of renting the church building for its worship services, Mennonite Community Church saw the request as a good opportunity to be in touch with Hmong Christians.

It was because of the contact with the Lao Evangelical Church that James met the brother of Shoua Moua and learned of Shoua's interest in church planting. Shoua has been the pastor of Hmong Community Church—Mennonite since fall 1990. (See the story on page 6.)

James wasn't always keen about church planting, let alone the pastorate. Although he received a bachelor of divinity degree from Goshen (Ind.) Biblical Seminary in 1966, he never thought he would be a pastor.

In fact, when James and Faith, his wife, served in Japan with Mennonite Board of Missions from 1966 to 1969 and 1971 to 1975, they were adamant about earning their own wages.

"We were influenced by an article by John Howard Yoder that talked about being a witness as you go about your daily life. We didn't want to take any money from the church," says James.

Pacifists: In those days, he recalls, "I was more of an activist, into peace and civil rights. But in Japan, I discovered that everybody agreed with me. All my students were pacifists. If I didn't include the spiritual part, there wouldn't have been a reason to establish a church in Japan. It gave me a new appreciation for evangelism."

Later, when he was pursuing a master's degree and then a doctorate related to linguistics at the University of Arizona in Tucson, Wenger took on a leadership role at the church there. And to his surprise, he found he enjoyed the work. "I came to realize that helping people grow spiritually is an important calling," he says.

Those who had questions about James' vision for Mennonite Community Church also were willing to try new things. "There may have been some skeptics at first, but success builds trust," he says.

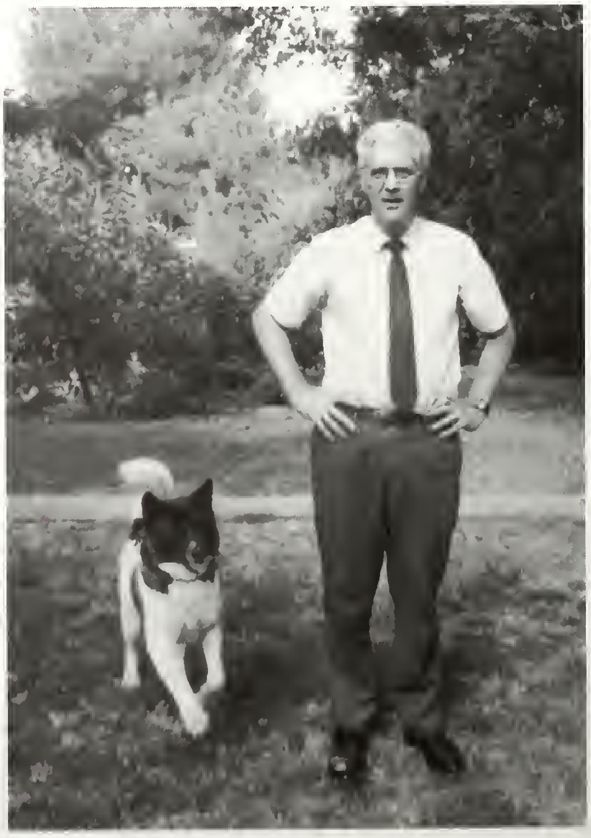
"Even with small successes, the church developed a 'can do' attitude," he says. "It built a kind of confidence, self-esteem. People thought, 'God can use us in this way.'"

He says that now that members of the Mennonite Community Church have planted a Hmong church and helped plant an English-speaking church in Clovis, Calif., they are planning to plant a Hispanic church in Fresno.

They also are giving more money to the church. In 1993, this 106-member congregation gave $16,000 more than what was originally budgeted. As a result, the church decided to increase its 1994 mission budget by 21 percent and its overall budget by 16 percent. When it was noted at a recent worship service that the giving to the general fund was behind by about $6,000, the members responded by putting more than $6,000 in the offering plate for that Sunday morning.

"As Christians we need to have a sense that God is calling us to new things. We have to be willing to take a risk and believe in God's strength," says James. "Mennonite Community Church is just one example of how significant things happen because of God's grace."

'As Christians we need to have a sense that God is calling us to new things': *James Wenger with Ms. Kita*



Called to plant Hispanic churches

Two Venezuelans are planting Mennonite churches among California Hispanics.

Carla Reimer

After many years of experience as church planters, Juan Montes and Emilio Zabala have no illusions about their line of work. "It is hard because you begin with zero. You have no building. You wonder how you will share your vision for a church. You have to trust that the Lord will help you," says Juan.

He recalls how in his first years as a church planter in the United States his family lived in one room and had to shower at a local restaurant. Today he is thankful to have two part-time jobs, working as a pastor at Iglesia Vida Nueva, a mission church of the Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference, and at a Hispanic Mennonite Brethren church in Parlier, Calif.

"Church planting is one of the hardest things you can do. You have to make sure you are called. When you have a commitment to Jesus, you don't feel as alone," says Emilio.

The two men spent considerable time planting churches in their native country of Venezuela, but they both felt called to work with Hispanic Mennonite churches in North America.

During the 1980s Juan helped plant seven churches in Venezuela with the support of Eastern Mennonite Missions. In 1990 he moved with his family to Los Angeles, where he had accepted a position as the pastor at a Mennonite Brethren church.

But after spending some time there, Juan and Carmen, his wife, decided that the city was no place to raise their children. They accepted an invitation to work at the Mennonite Brethren church in Parlier.

"Jesus called me and my family here. There are millions of Hispanics in California. Many of them lack education and resources. They need to come to Christ," says Juan.

Emilio says he saw the needs of the Hispanic community while he was a student at Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College and the pastor at the Parlier Mennonite Brethren church in 1989.

Juan Montes (left) and Emilio Zabala

"North Americans don't worship other gods like many South Americans do, but they do have one idol—money. The Hispanics here are influenced by that," he says.

"We have a lot of work to do in Venezuela, but there we have many leaders. In the United States there are few leaders who experience the call to work with the Hispanic population," he says.

As a result of his convictions, Emilio and Vilma, his wife, moved to Reedley, Calif., in June with the goal of planting a Mennonite church. Vilma, a lawyer, found employment at an accounting firm, and Emilio began helping Juan at Iglesia Vida Nueva.

"I have traveled in many countries in Latin America. But I think people are tired of religion in the United States more than anywhere," Emilio says. "So many churches in the United States are dying. I want to form a strong foundation so the church will never die."

With the support of Peace Community Church—Mennonite in Clovis, Calif., Emilio hopes to plant a Spanish-speaking Mennonite church in Sanger, Calif., where 50 percent of the town's population of 15,000 is Hispanic.

"It is hard to get people to come to church because they lead such fast-paced lives," says Emilio. "If people don't want to come to church, we go visit them in their homes.

"People like the fact that I have a Venezuelan accent. I start with our common ground. I talk about the Latin American soap operas first, before religion. Many of the people I visit are third-generation Mexican-Americans. Their kids have lost their ability to speak Spanish. So I teach them Spanish for free. It is important to be in touch with the daily things that are important to them."

Emilio is also paying close attention to what Juan does to draw people into his church. Started in 1993, Iglesia Vida Nueva has about 40 participants. But over 125 people attend the evangelistic services held in the parking lot at First Mennonite Church in Reedley.

Juan stresses the importance of developing strong relationships within the church through cell groups. Once a week, he teaches cell group leaders how to be better disciples of Christ.

"The cell groups not only help a church grow in numbers, but also spiritually. They open a little door for people to come to church," says Juan, who has worked with cell groups for more than 12 years.

"The doctrine for Mennonites is based on the Bible. What I preach in church is that people need to recognize the relevance of God," says Juan.

One day, he says, his wife helped a drunk man who had been asking for money because he had a broken hip. "She took him to our house and cleaned him up. When I saw him, the man then said he needed one more thing—Jesus. He wrote me later to say he was the pastor of a church now.

"We need to take every opportunity to be a witness for God. I'm happy when someone comes to Jesus."

'God is more powerful

Hmong pastor Shoua Moua wants to help his people.

Carla Reimer

Whether he is helping Hmong refugees find employment or praying for their sick children in the hospital, Shoua Moua does not have a lot of extra time on his hands at the end of the day.

But in an interview in Fresno, where he is pastor of the Hmong Community Church—Mennonite, Shoua spoke of his desire to do more to help this ethnic group, of which he is a member.

Like many other Hmong in Fresno, Shoua and his family were forced to flee Laos when the Communists gained power in 1975. They spent their first year in refugee camps in Thailand. In the camps as many as 17,000 people lived in two square miles, and five to six people died each day.

In 1976 Shoua and his family received permission to immigrate to Australia. Shoua spent close to 10 years working in factories there. His first contact with Mennonites came when he visited his brother in Fresno in 1987.

Later, when he heard that the Mennonite Community Church was looking for a Hmong church planter, he wrote the pastor to say he was interested in the position. Shoua spent two years studying pastoral ministries at Hesston (Kan.) College before he and his family headed to Fresno in July 1990.

From the day he arrived, Shoua has tried to find ways to meet the spiritual and physical needs of the Hmong in Fresno. It has not been an easy task.

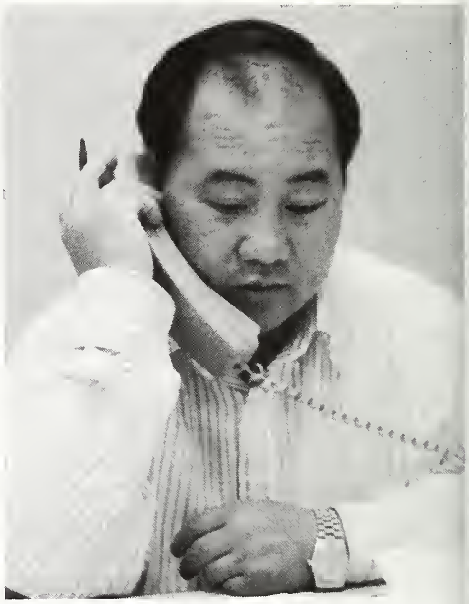
To begin with, he said, most Hmong believe in the spirit world. "They emphasize healing. When someone in their family is sick, the first thing they do is ask for the help of a shaman. If the shaman can't heal the person, they go to the hospital. Often, at that point, they will also call a pastor," he said.

When Shoua visits a Hmong family for the first time, he asks to hear the story of how they left Laos. "I try to trace who they are through their background. It brings me closer to them," he said. On his second visit he explains that he is from a church and asks them about any difficulties they are experiencing. On the third visit Shoua offers resources to help them with their problems and then, before he leaves, he offers a short prayer.

"I try to explain to them that our God is more powerful," he said. Several families have converted to Christianity because they have experienced healing through Shoua's prayers. About 70 percent of the 38 families who belong to the Hmong Community Church—Mennonite are from a non-Christian background.

Farmers: The economic realities also are daunting. There are approximately 30,000 Hmong in Fresno and the majority are on welfare. "It is difficult for them to find jobs. They lack the skills and experiences needed for employment here. The technology is so high," he said. "Many worked as farmers in small villages in Laos. When the war started, they were forced to join the army."

Because of Jesus' love: *A young Hmong girl who attends Hmong Community Church*



When he travels to other cities, Shoua Moua usually doesn't book a room at a motel. Instead, he looks in the yellow pages for the last names of people who are Hmong in origin. If he happens to find a Hmong family, he phones them and asks if he can stay with them or at least visit them. They often say yes. Then he asks them if they are familiar with Christianity. His goal is to find families who would be willing to plant churches.

Many Hmong, including Shoua, also find it difficult to adjust to the pace of life in the West. "In Laos I had no schedule. Here I have to plan one month in advance. It makes me angry sometimes. I didn't have that kind of anger in Laos," said Shoua.

Still, Shoua is trying to find ways for the Hmong in Fresno to step out of the cycle of poverty. In fall 1993, together with the Mennonite Community

Church, he started an entry-level job placement program for refugees who are on welfare. So far nine Southeast Asians have found work as a result of Jubilee Jobs. (See article at right.) Mennonite Voluntary Service, a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church, is looking for a volunteer to help coordinate this job placement program.

Besides receiving from the Hmong Community Church and Mennonite Community Church, Jubilee Jobs has received funding from First Mennonite Church, Reedley, Calif.; First Mennonite Church, Paso Robles, Calif., and Mennonite Mutual Aid.

"I want to help the Hmong people because of the love of Jesus," said Shoua. "Every day I see so many of them waiting for the [mail carrier] to deliver their public assistance checks. The church needs to help people have freedom to live. We need to give them hope."

Help people have freedom to live: *Chou Moua, Shoua Moua's wife, holding one of the handicrafts she hopes to sell*

Jubilee Jobs offers hope for the future

Bee Yang has looked for work in the Fresno, Calif., area for a long time without any success. As a result, Bee and his family were forced to go on welfare. And while the monthly checks helped pay the bills, they didn't offer much hope for the future.

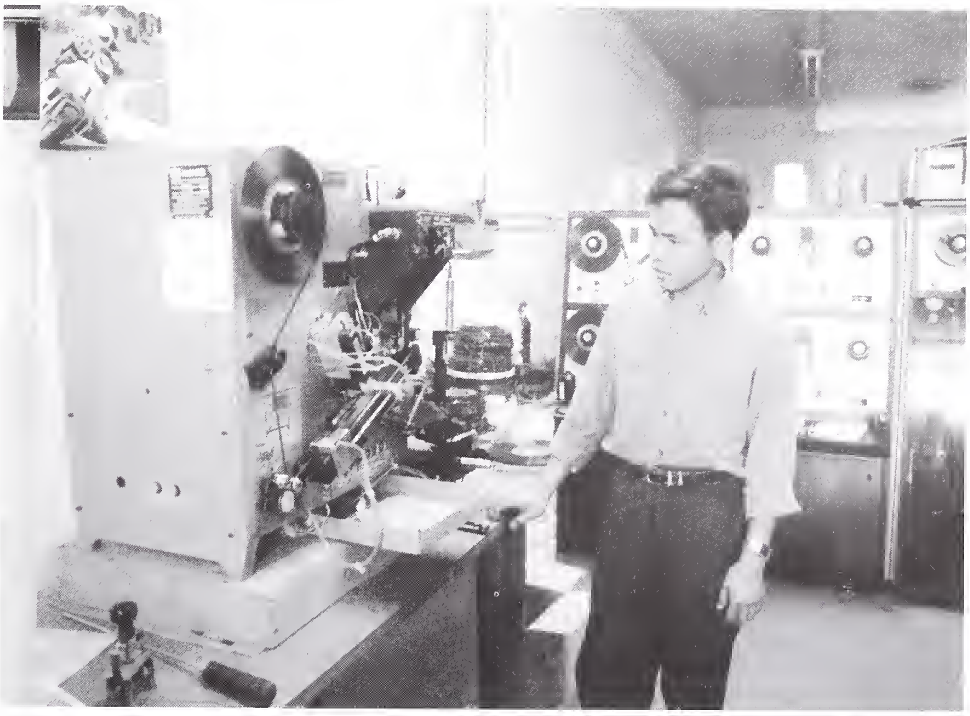
But about four months ago, Bee was hired at Kenjo Audio in Fresno through Jubilee Jobs, a program that finds entry-level work for refugees. Started by the Hmong Community Church—Mennonite and Community Mennonite Church, both located in Fresno, Jubilee Jobs has found employment for eight other Southeast Asians since it began in fall 1993.

As a result of his employment, Bee finds he has a much different outlook. He is optimistic that his new job will provide him with the skills and financial stability to start his own business one day. "This is much better than being on welfare. I am very happy and thankful. Now I can plan for my future," he says.

Kenjo Audio sells about 20,000 cassette tapes a week, including blank cassettes and music tapes. Part of Bee's work includes duplicating music tapes and processing orders. Owner Jim Clymer, who is a member of the College Community Mennonite Brethren Church in Fresno, said that it isn't always easy working with Bee because he doesn't know English as well as some of the other employees. On the other hand, he said, Bee's strong work ethic makes up for the language barrier.

"I have a lot of riffraff banging on my door. It feels good to give a job to someone who deserves it and who is also a Christian. I would be remiss if I didn't give something back to the church," he says.

Bee, who is a member of the Hmong Community Church—Mennonite, says, "The church has offered me support. It has shown me how to love other people. It is good for me."



When the Communists took control of Laos in 1975, Bee Yang (shown at his work at Kenjo Audio in Fresno) was only 6 or 7 years old. Bee and his family hid in the forest for four years before his parents decided they should escape to the refugee camps in Thailand. It took them almost one month to walk to the camps. "We didn't carry much with us. We had a little bit of rice. I saw many Hmong people dying. I didn't understand where we were headed," he says. "But when we arrived at the camp, I remember thinking that I would have the chance to live a bit longer."

Making harmony: from music to mediation

Elaine Enns left her pursuit of a music career to work in conflict mediation.

Carla Reimer

After Elaine Enns graduated with a degree in music performance from Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) in Winnipeg in 1988, she dreamed of pursuing a career as a professional musician. But as much as Elaine loved music, she found that she couldn't forget about her friendship with a 13-year-old Native girl named Anitra.

'Holy work': *Elaine Enns*

During her last year at CMBC, Elaine had signed up to participate in the Big Sister program. She was matched with Anitra. The adolescent was the mother of twins and pregnant again when Elaine met her for the first time.

"She was constantly in and out of the juvenile court system because of things like shoplifting," said Elaine in an interview in Fresno, Calif. "I asked myself, 'Why is this happening?' Then I realized that there were no rules for her that made sense. No one was paying attention to her story."

Her concerns over how the justice system had failed Anitra led Elaine to accept a Mennonite Voluntary Service position with a Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) in Fresno, beginning in September 1989. MVS is a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

VORP, a program started by Mennonite Central Committee that has spread to locations across North America as well as Europe and Australia, offers an alternative approach to conflict.

Instead of using the court system, VORP arranges for meetings between the victim and offender. A mediator facilitates the discussion about the case and helps the two parties come to an agreement about what kind of restitution would be appropriate. While judges, police and probation officers refer cases to VORP, participation in the program is voluntary for both the victim and the offender.

"I wanted to see how kids responded to an approach to conflict that wasn't abstract but based on relationships," said Elaine.

Singing career: Still, she said, she planned to return to Canada following her MVS assignment to pursue her singing career. But she soon discovered that she liked her work with juvenile offenders so much that she no longer wanted to be a full-time musician.

Today, almost three years after she finished her MVS assignment, Elaine is working as a half-time employee at the Fresno VORP. She also is pursuing a master's degree in theology, conflict management and peacemaking at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno.

"My faith in God is definitely the motivating factor behind my involvement with the VORP program," said Elaine. "The church should be the incarnating and reconciling spirit of Christ."

Enns spends about half her time working as a mediator. The rest of the time she works on getting churches to identify formally with and support the Fresno VORP.

It is clear that the casework is what is closest to her heart. "I love going into people's homes," she said. "I have never felt uncomfortable or experienced any hostility.

"I think VORP mediators are respected because we are removed from the court system. We offer the victim and offender the opportunity to reconcile, but it is clear that our program is voluntary. Even if they decide not to participate, we have shown them respect and love."

Elaine said she will remember the details of one of her first cases for a

> *"The church should be the incarnating and reconciling spirit of Christ."*
>
> **Elaine Enns**

long time. "It was a situation where a light bulb went on for both the victims and the offenders," she recalled. The extended families of both the victims and the offenders attended the mediation. Since they were all from a small town outside Fresno, they knew each other by name.

The case involved two young boys who were caught throwing rocks onto a busy street. One of the rocks went through the windshield of a car that was part of a funeral procession. As the glass shattered, the family inside the car thought they were being shot at. The driver of the car swerved to avoid any further damage. The mother of a baby lunged to protect her baby in the backseat.

Although glass landed on the passengers, including the baby, no one was injured. However, all the family members were traumatized by the incident.

"These kids, like a lot of juvenile offenders, didn't think they had hurt anybody. They said they threw the rocks because they were bored," said Elaine.

Shook-up: But when the boys met the family members who had been in the car that day and heard how the experience had affected them, "the boys were pretty shook-up. I don't think they will ever throw rocks again," she said. The boys agreed to pay for the damage to the car.

Then, said Elaine, "the grandfather, who had been driving the car, hugged the two boys and told them he was proud of them because they had participated in the mediation. He told them that they were good kids.

"That's when the two boys started crying. The boys told the family that they were sorry like they really meant it. Soon everybody was hugging each other. I have never seen such physical love. That is what is so holy about this work. It's the Spirit of the Lord."

Even when the mediations don't go that smoothly and some of the offenders have "really messed up, I think, That could be me," she said. "I see the image of God in all people. As a church we can't write off anyone. No one is beyond redemption. We are the hands of God."

The Fresno VORP relies on support from area churches, including a number of Mennonite congregations, and various individuals. In addition to its mediation program, the Fresno VORP offers training workshops on how to start a church-based VORP.

"We would love to see a VORP program in every community that has a Mennonite church. It is one way that Mennonites can share the message of peace," says Ron Claassen, Fresno VORP director.

For more information about training workshops contact VORP, 1717 S. Chestnut Ave., Fresno, CA 93702, 1-800-909-VORP, or (209) 441-1017.

'Reconciliation at heart of Scripture'

Ron Claassen decided to start the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program in Fresno in 1983 because he believes "reconciliation is at the heart of the Scripture. How many times has the church accepted the dominant view of culture, which says that the only response to crime is punishment? VORP is about restorative justice. I feel this is what God is calling us to do."

The probation officer who referred the first five cases to the Fresno VORP was so impressed with the results that the Fresno VORP ended up with 80 cases by the end of its first year.

"The probation officer told me that he could tell a substantial difference between the offenders who went through the court system and those that went through our program. He was surprised that the offenders didn't try to find a way out of their restitution contracts," recalled Claassen.

And the program continues to grow, he said. In 1994, volunteer mediators worked with over 400 juvenile offender cases and about 25 cases involving adults.

In 1993 the number of U.S. citizens behind bars reached 3.1 million, which means that there are 519 prisoners for every 100,000 U.S. residents, according to a Sept. 12 *Christian Science Monitor* article. Only Russia, with 558 inmates per 100,000 residents, has a higher rate of imprisonment.

Letters

OBJECTION TO VOLTAIRE

Thank you for some good input on pastoral ministry in the Sept. 27 issue. And also your Sept. 13 issue on ministry to children. Your editorial referring to Kristin Neufeld moved me to tears.

I was shocked to see a quotation from Voltaire on the Aug. 23 cover of *The Mennonite*. Until the end Voltaire tried to destroy Christianity and ridiculed the Bible. Could you not find a better source to communicate your message?

God bless as you continue to challenge us all. *Mary Derksen, Fukuoka, Japan*

DOUBLE STANDARD? NO

In her letter (Oct. 25 issue), Kathy Collmer wonders if pro-choice people are hypocritical in their rejection of capital punishment but acceptance of the killing of babies (abortion). It is really not a double standard but a difference in understanding.

I don't consider an embryo to be a baby, person or human being. I've observed embryos in a row of glass jars showing the various stages of gestation. What I saw wasn't a person, and could only with difficulty be identified as human and not canine. Somewhere along the length of the display, however, the objects in the glass jars started to look like babies, which is probably why it is difficult or illegal in most states to obtain a late-term abortion.

On the other hand, are pro-life people hypocritical? If it is assumed that a "completely innocent baby" (is there a guilty baby?) exists from the moment of conception, then anyone harming a conceptus should be prosecuted under child-abuse laws. Narcotics, cigarettes, alcohol and caffeine are known to cause harm, thus pregnant women who take these would be guilty of child abuse. Because the conceptus can't be taken into protective custody, the pro-life movement should be trying to send these women to prison in order to prevent further abuse. *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*

DOUBLE STANDARD? YES

Thanks to Kathy Collmer (Letters, Oct. 25 issue) for the reminder that abortion is much more of a killer than capital punishment. It is difficult to understand why there is a double standard. We agree with her letter. *Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Ortman, Marion, S.D.*

GLAMOROUS DISCOMFORT

Gordon Houser wrote a good editorial about the disease of affluence (Oct. 25 issue). Even a cursory reading of the gospels indicates that we are supposed to put God's purposes first, and that we are to help those less fortunate. This is difficult to do. As for me, I willingly admit that comfort is more important to me than the welfare of others. I'm more concerned about enjoying my middle-class amenities than about helping some peasant halfway around the world. I'm quite sure that 95 percent of Mennonites would have to honestly admit this also.

Inside
Mennonite
Mennonites in Brazil

Perhaps we need to hear more stories of people who take on discomfort to help their neighbors. But not too many stories of people who do overseas assignments and then return to their comfortable North American life. Very fashionable, very glamorous. I'm much more impressed by the person who labors in obscurity, in the inner city, in the shanties or in the clinic. *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*

WATCH YOUR N'S

It was hard for me to copy the title of our conference paper, as you print it [on the cover]. Why? In school we did not learn to print Ns the way you do. If a child did so the teacher would gently help the child to get it correct—not a backward N or lowercase n. Why do you print it that way?

It reminds me when I used to print backwards as a child. But that is not the same either. All I hope is that if our conferences become "one," and if they take "The Mennonite" for the name of the common paper that they will print it correctly. *Helene Wiens Dick, Bloomington, Ill.*

ULTIMATE PRO-LIFE ISSUE

Thank you for your timely Oct. 11 issue. And cheers for David Ortman's article (page 3), especially his statement, "The environment is not a partisan issue. The environment is not a single issue. It is a survival issue. It is the ultimate pro-life issue." This would make a great poster—I would like to order a half-dozen!

I lament that churches have only just begun seriously to address issues of our world's environmental crisis, poverty, consumerism and women's issues. Arthur Schopenhauer once said, "All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident."

Perhaps especially we as Mennonites can now take more seriously one of the main causes of these tragedies. Eisenhower stated, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in a final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone—it is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children."

It certainly is not hard to make the connection between a military-industrial dominated system and what happens to the environment.

Perhaps the time has come when we as a "Christian" nation must answer to those children who have perished for lack of food, or from "imported" weapons, while we thoughtlessly consumed.

One fitting and appropriate response would be support of the U.S. Peace Tax Fund Bill (S2028 and HR2019). *Carol Wiebe, Trinidad, Calif.*

LEARN FROM 12 STEPS

Thank you for your Oct. 25 editorial, and for injecting 12-step concepts in that piece. I went to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary years ago to spend time with people who might be interested in those connections of 12-step recovery and the diseases of our day with the Mennonite concept of "gelassenheit." I did a one-day workshop on campus, bringing together Charlie Cooper (Mennonite pastor), Jack Smith (of the Stanley Foundation) and the work of Walter Hochstetler (*Gelassenheit: The Conquest of Individualism in the Discovery of Community*). There were no professors who came to the workshop, three students (none was Mennonite) and lots of local media people. That was the last I ever heard about the project from anyone Mennonite. Sometimes people like you use some 12-step language, which is good, [but] Mennonites are missing so much by not learning from 12-steppers. *Jim Compton-Schmidt, Fresno, Calif.*

AMEN AND AMEN

Amen, amen and again I say amen, to Donald Fry's Speaking Out feature in the Oct. 25 issue of *The Mennonite*. I am going to make photocopies to have on hand when people start quoting Rush Limbaugh at me. *Kathleen Kern, Webster, NY*

CANADA'S HEALTH CARE BEST

I am concerned about attitudes from some people in the United States concerning Canada's health-care system. I am a citizen of the United States and have lived in Canada for 29 years, having married a Canadian. Neither I nor my family members have ever had a problem with the system and have had excellent care. I had a serious illness 11 years ago, and one of my children had a long hospitalization six years ago. Because of the excellent care both of us received we are now well. If it would not have been for the health-care system here, we would have nothing—not even a home, as we would have had to sell it. My child's treatment came to $70,000, and I do not know the cost of mine, which was six months of treatments.

The other evening I tuned into an American radio station. I could not believe what I heard. The person hosting the show said that the U.S. has the best health-care system and that if you live in Canada and go to a doctor you are taking your own life in your hands. How absurd! This particular radio host was also negative about every issue. If this negativism is what Americans are hearing, then the very negative will become more negative. God forbid. Do people believe everything they hear?

When I go to the States I usually hear the same negative comments about our health-care system. If people lived here they would experience the benefits of the great system that we have. The largest percentage of our doctors are top-quality and give the best care. Ours is the best. I would rather pay higher taxes and not have to worry should I or my family have an urgent medical situation. Everyone benefits because Canada provides for all of its people, rich and poor. *Pauline Buhr, Kitchener, Ont.*

EDIFYING ARTICLES

As a couple of your older readers, my wife and I want you to know we especially appreciated the Nov. 8 issue of *The Mennonite*. From Prologue to Editorial, the materials are educational, edifying and encouraging in a Christian life in the Lord.

The articles on fruitfulness, abiding, walking and guiding seem so right to us who have been on the journey for quite some time. (I'm just a bit older than your father, Gordon.) *Frank and LaVerne Horst, Warden, Wash.*

From our leaders

Thanks to our General Conference family

To those of you who gave to the work of the church through your local congregations or through the conferences, I offer a deep-felt thank you. Your efforts make a difference. Your generosity produces thanksgiving to God in many ways, in many places. I hope you were enriched with joy through your giving.

How do gifts to General Conference produce thanksgiving to God? As God's healing and hope flow through those serving with Mennonite Voluntary Service, expressions of thanks flow back to God. A recent example is the moving tribute by 9-year-old Veronica Jose to Tamara Hostetler, a volunteer teacher at Hopi Mission School, at Tamara's funeral.

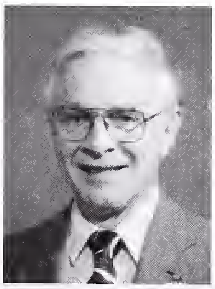
Here are other examples:

- The delight in the eyes of Sunday school children being taught with *Jubilee: God's Good News* material give thanks to God. So do the aha's of students at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary as they gain insights.
- Church leaders overseas, home mission committee members in the area conferences in North America, and church planters say, "Thank you, God," when they receive a word of encouragement, sought-after counsel, financial assistance or the assurance that others remember them in prayer.

Based on giving through November, General Conference expects to receive a little over $4.5 million by Jan. 31. This giving helps produce these and many other examples of thanksgiving.

In our families, our congregations and our conferences, we have opportunities that exceed our resources. As we make decisions about priorities, let's remember to maintain a good balance between local efforts and the work of the church done by the conferences. Involvement in and support of efforts beyond the local congregation bring us fulfillment.

Please pray often for the work of the General Conference. Those congregations who have hosted the prayer scroll have a visual image of the special call to prayer from the General Boards of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church for the 12 months leading up to and through the gathering at Wichita, Kan., July 25-30, 1995. Some congregations will receive the prayer scroll in the coming six months. Many important decisions will be made in Wichita. Pray also for General Conference leaders who will meet in Newton, Kan., for Council of Commissions March 10-14, 1995, and for the decisions they will need to make.



Throughout 1995 "may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13). *Vern Preheim, General Secretary*

. . . Bible

Pregnancy and peril

Revelation 12 and the Annunciation

Mathew Swora

We usually associate Advent and Christmas with peaceful scenes of shepherds and sheep, wise men, Mary and Joseph worshiping a sleeping infant in a shadowy stall by candlelight. The Christmas story is an important part of the Christian message. But it is in connection with the crucifixion that we find the birth's full meaning.

As Jesus hung on the cross, he saw John the beloved disciple nearby, next to Mary, his mother. As the oldest son of a widow, Jesus felt the responsibility for his mother's welfare. He could have conferred her to a younger brother, but instead he said to John the beloved disciple, "Here is your mother." To Mary he said, "Mother, this is your son." Something about John made him a better choice.

Tradition says that this same John wrote the Book of Revelation. In chapter 12 of that book we read the account of a woman giving birth and fleeing with her baby into the wilderness with monstrous forces of evil in pursuit. Sounds like the story of Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus, but why recount this story in a book about the future?

When we remember this adoptive relationship between John and Mary, it makes sense that something of Mary's story would show up in John's vision. Perhaps John had heard his adopted mother recount the events of Jesus' birth many times.

John wrote Revelation some 60 years after the crucifixion. Mary had died, and John was about 80 years old. But not too old for the Roman authorities to send him in exile to the mines on the island of Patmos.

There John had a vision of the church's future. In that vision the Spirit uses many images from the past, especially from the Old Testament. There are also images from his present, of the dark underside of the Empire and of organized pagan religion. So what will the future be like for us? According to Revelation, it will be just like yesterday and today, only more so. Evil and good will grow in scope and power.

The images in Revelation 12 invite us to understand our present and our future in terms of the story of Mary and Jesus. The events of that story, from the angel's annunciation to the Savior's birth right under the nose of some monstrous enemies, to the flight to Egypt, become themes or pictures by which we can interpret the church's history, and sometimes our own personal histories.

The images in Revelation 12 invite us to understand our present and our future in terms of the story of Mary and Jesus.

CEO God: One theme is pregnancy. What we see in the Bible depends, in part, on the glasses through which we read it, that is, the assumptions we bring in our minds when we read. The kinds of things we look for will determine what we overlook. If we're into control, achievement and efficiency, then we'll more readily notice those Bible passages about how God speaks and things happen instantaneously. We'll see God mostly as a chief executive officer kind of God. God said, "Let there be light!" and there was light. "Only say the word, and my servant shall be healed," the Roman officer said to Jesus (Matthew 8:8). And Jesus was impressed with his faith. There's plenty of this kind of power, authority and efficiency in the Bible.

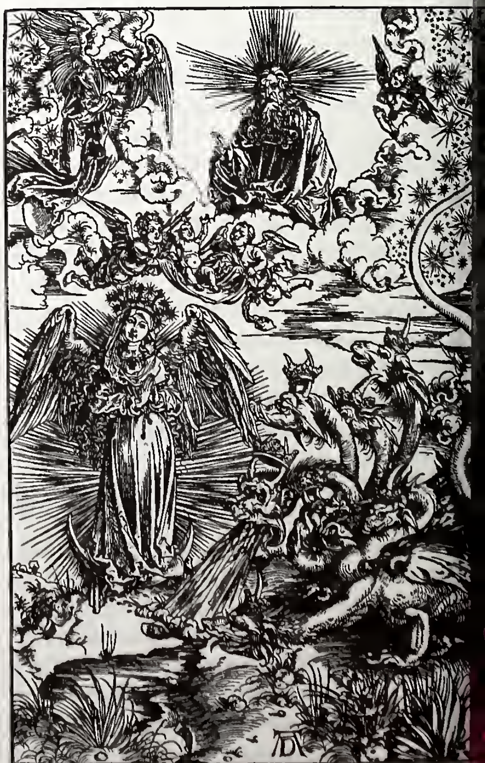
But life doesn't always work this way for us. Nor does God. God also works in other, more patient and subtle ways that we might compare with pregnancy. Jesus compared the last days to the struggles and stress of pregnancy, to be followed by the joy of birth (Mark 13:8). Many processes of life tend to defy the simple command-and-carry-out style that works in other settings.

So what does this have to do with Revelation 12? This vision of Mary's pregnancy and delivery tells us that we the church will also experience something like pregnancy. Typically those months of waiting and the hours of labor may seem to drag on forever. Labor itself can be confusing and disorienting. But after the delivery, Mom and Dad may think, "I'm a parent already? So soon? I'm not sure I'm ready."

So it is with the church, as we await the renewal of all things. We, too, will sometimes wait, struggle, suffer, labor, be confused and distressed and wait some more. And finally, we will rejoice. In a sense, we too are pregnant. Our newer, truer selves, in the image of Christ, are hidden within, slowly and sometimes painfully emerging through this confusing process we call life.

This is the first of two articles on Revelation 12.

Mathew Swora is pastor at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan.



THE
Mennonite

December 27 1994

WINDOW TO MISSION

Building bridges
from the church to the world

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion "your God reigns!"

Isaiah 52:7 NIV

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Cover photo credit: Bek Linsenmeyer

Mission Statement: Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: (1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; (2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; (3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; (4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Caroling around the Christmas tree

Reflections of Barb Schlegel, Wanda Stauffer and Susan Burkey, First Mennonite Church, Lincoln, Neb.

We talked many times about reaching out into the neighborhood around the church. How could we invite neighbors to our church and be more of a light in the neighborhood? We didn't feel we knew how to "do evangelism," but inviting the neighbors to sing carols around an outdoor Christmas tree seemed just the right thing.

Several men from the church went out into the country and cut a huge tree which was anchored in front of the church. Children made decorations in Sunday school and families brought lights. Invitations were hand-carried to all the neighbors within four blocks of the church. For some it was a first experience of inviting a stranger to a church activity.

The Sunday evening of the caroling found the church people excited as some unloaded hay bales for seating, some placed luminaries along the sidewalk up to the Christmas tree and some prepared hot chocolate and hot cider to go with Christmas cookies. Cars slowed down as drivers strained to see what was happening at the Mennonite church.

As we were singing it was good to see that some neighbors did come to sing with us. Later as we moved into the church for refreshments, one long-time neighbor said she had never before been in our church. One father and son who came that night are well remembered because their family subsequently became active in our church during the time they lived in Lincoln.

We didn't have the carol sing the next Christmas. What would have been the impact if we had continued the event each year? A series of neighborhood activities throughout the year, such as our annual neighborhood garage sale, would give the opportunity for more contact. Being intentional about reaching out to the neighborhood wasn't what we were used to doing. It did help us begin to know our neighbors. Getting out of our comfort zone allowed God to work in us and taught us more about serving God together.

Brett Stauffer places his ornament high on First Mennonite's tree before the carolers arrive.

3 lessons from bridge building

by **Julie Janzen Shires**

"I can't come today." DeMario was very subdued.

"May I talk to your mother?" I asked.

He scratched himself nervously. "No, she's asleep. I've got to watch my little sister." Seven-year-old DeMario was frequently asked to watch his 4-year-old sister while his mother slept when she got off her shift at work.

"Well, tell her we will come by for you tomorrow," I said hopefully as I headed off to the summer recreation program.

DeMario was a kid with little to do. When he did come to the program, he was disruptive, pulling hair, yelling, picking fights, swearing, constantly vying for attention.

DeMario was the kind of kid we hoped to reach.

How can a church respond to children like DeMario? Rainbow Mennonite Church in Kansas City, Kan., worships in a building that is shared by two other congregations. Together the three congregations have sponsored community projects such as work groups, a Self-Help Crafts store, a neighborhood playground and an Easter egg hunt. Now we were sponsoring a program for kids 5 to 12, five afternoons a week. The neighborhood surrounding the church has few activities for children and they tend to participate in acts of vandalism, even gang affiliation.

Josh was a large 12-year-old, with a voice to match his size. Josh took advantage of his size and voice to hide the fact that in school he was called a "dummy."

Steven was a 10-year-old with four sisters. He lived with his mom and rarely saw his real father, whom he missed very much. He was also disruptive, until a volunteer sat down to play a game of checkers, then his face broke into a smile.

Sara was 8. She and her sister lived with their grandparents. Sara had been sexually abused by a stranger at the age of 4. She would often begin the recreation activities, but would soon withdraw, go to a chair and sing to herself.

To this day she remains withdrawn.

How does a middle-class congregation build bridges in an urban setting? Our efforts at recreation seem small in the face of such profound situations. I worked with our recreation program for two years. I learned three things from which we can all take heart.

1. God's work does not require a lot of expensive trappings. Volunteers from the church led crafts. One schoolteacher led two sessions in which the children made masks out of tissue paper, glue and feathers. Another volunteer organized indoor games of bowling, hockey and jump rope. Kids enjoyed homemade cookies and Kool Aid. They spent hours playing checkers, Monopoly, Uno and Clue. Most of what we were able to entertain with came out of our closets and basements at home.

2. God blesses our efforts. We are one "cog in the wheel of life." Recreation is one small part of the total experiences these children will encounter. Some of us can point to a specific point in our lives where we went through a profound change. But for most of us, we grow into people through many experiences, with many different people throughout our lives. Summer recreation may be but one of the many positive encounters these children experience.

3. God removes our fear. Whatever misgivings I might have had about working with the "urban poor" were dissipated after the first day. Regardless of what influences children encounter through television, video games and other high-tech media, they still love the games we all liked when we were kids. Even 12-year-olds are enthusiastic about Red Rover and musical chairs.

The church still reaches people and has a tremendous capacity to build bridges beyond our congregation. Kids like DeMario like what we have to share.

Julie Janzen Shires works part-time as a computer software trainer. She and her husband, Paul, have an infant son, William. They are active members of Rainbow Mennonite Church in Kansas City, Kan.

by Gretchen Kingsley

Her name is Donner, not Donna. She and her husband came from down South, having left behind the hard life of sharecropping.

Finding hope *in the neighborhood*

My husband and I were among a small group of seminarians looking for affordable housing in Elkhart, Ind., and moving toward intentional Christian community. We found our homes not far from Donner's, although I didn't get to know her till years later.

In 1981, after nearly 10 years as a house church, Fellowship of Hope purchased a small church building that had been used as a labor union hall to accommodate our growing congregation. As we began to grow, we sought ways to be more involved with our neighbors. Summer Bible school was always anticipated by the children. Donner lived across the street from the church and thus we began our acquaintance.

The local news media increasingly described this area as a depressed neighborhood. Instability and crime were more apparent. Sometimes I felt like a foreigner. Sometimes I wanted to run. Then I asked, "Do you really want me here, God? Maybe you are calling me to another country. Wouldn't it be easier? Where is my spiritual journey taking me?"

Some direction came through various prayer disciplines. During prayer retreats at Mary's Solitude, a Catholic retreat center, I became aware some unknown sister was "tending to the Lord" in this place of prayer, frequently changing the altar cloths, plants and candles in the chapel. She became to me the symbol of the woman who broke the alabaster jar which released a fragrance and comfort for Jesus. Observers questioned the waste—the money could have been given to the poor.

The image of that alabaster jar surrounded me like a fragrance crossing hundreds of years. An artistic side of me that has struggled to express itself in mission cracked open like the tiny jar. I wanted to tend to the Lord in acts of beauty by making spaces for others to encounter Jesus. I envisioned some empty rooms in our large home along a busy four-lane highway transformed into a place of prayer.

Fellowship of Hope's neighborhood festival 1994.

The actual work of transformation was furthered through the local Salvation Army Thrift Store. The items I needed for each room always appeared or were even set aside by an attendant who came to understand my vision. I delighted to think that these recycled items had been "saved by grace" and transformed for mission.

The prayer rooms are called "St. John's by the Highway" after John the Baptist. While I come and go in my daily work, others come and go in prayer—right here in the city.

Like the woman with the jar, I can sense that the Accuser wants to fill me with doubt. "How can you invest in a place of prayer when there is so much need in this neighborhood and in the world?" Yet God keeps affirming my steps with this "alabaster jar."

This past summer Donner and I watched the neighborhood festival at the Fellowship of Hope Church parking lot. As we sat on her porch swing Donner said, "You know, Jane and I prayed for this."

After the shooting that had happened here a week ago I agreed that we needed a lot of prayer for a safe gathering. Then it struck me that the Jane she had prayed with was a neighbor who had moved away more than five years ago. "What do you mean you and Jane prayed for this?"

"Well, before you people ever moved into that building there was a lot of trouble in that parking lot," Donner responded with deep conviction. "Jane and I began praying that Christians would return to this church. God don't turn his ears when his children pray."

That afternoon I understood in a new way the bridge between us. Donner's prayer ministry has spanned the years, long ago bringing us to this place, touching us this day. She is also a part of the prayer ministry in this neighborhood!

Donner, though legally blind, sees with eyes of faith. Her recognition that prayer is a powerful means of action was an affirmation to me. I will continue offering this space for prayer, this hidden work of the kingdom that will flower in ways I may never see.

Gretchen Kingsley lives in Elkhart, Ind., where she works in a local quilt shop. She and her husband, Keith, have three children in college and are members of Fellowship of Hope Mennonite Church.

The bells

by Mary Rempel

Slowly I slip the last bell off the branch. For the past 12 years bells and white lights have been the only decorations on our Christmas tree. My daughter gives me a new bell every December 19, something she has done these past 12 years.

That Christmas 13 years ago is etched on my memory. How I had looked forward to the big family reunion, to being with all my sisters and brothers and nieces and nephews and my wonderful mother.

The reunion took place as planned on December 26, but Mother's place was empty. On the evening of December 19, crossing the street on her way to church, Mother had been struck by a reckless driver. She died within a few hours.

Mother was buried on Christmas Eve morning. The minister said she had gone home for Christmas. "Yes," I thought angrily, "but I, too, have come home for Christmas, to stay with Mother."

I did not attend church on Christmas morning. Alone in my brother's house the gray, rainy weather matched my doleful mood. Standing at the window, I could hear the bells of Westminster Abbey (in Mission, B.C.). Opening the window, I could hear a pattern, a little louder each time. The bells actually began to sound joyful. A semblance of peace came over me as the words of Longfellow's poem came to mind:

"I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play
And wild and sweet the words repeat
of peace on earth, goodwill to men."

Goodwill? The thought of the injustice of Mother's death brought back my anger and pain and emptiness.

"And in despair I bowed my head;
'There is no peace on earth,' I said.
'For hate is strong and mocks the song
of peace on earth, goodwill to men.'"

It seemed an eon passed before my turmoil subsided and I could take up the next stanza.

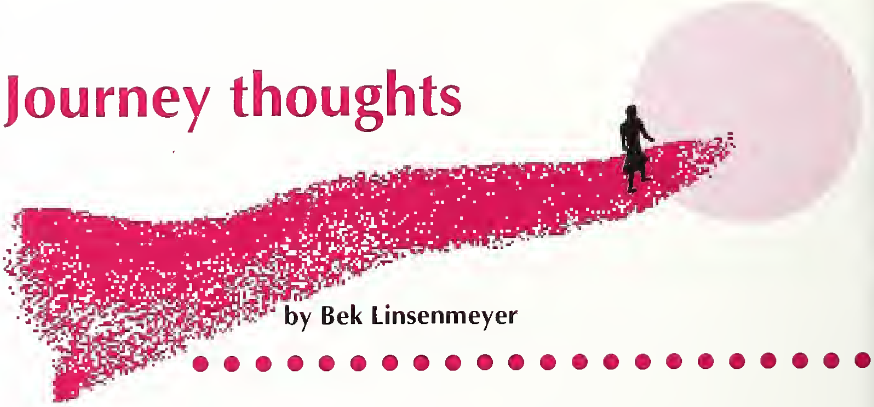
"Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead, nor doth he sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail
With peace on earth, goodwill to men.'"

Still the bells rang. I bowed my head and prayed, "This wrong, and all the wrongs in the world—prejudice, intrigue, violence, wars, poverty, greed, lies—shall someday meet justice and be rectified? God, help me believe it."

Coming out of my reverie, I lay the last bell into the box and close the lid. Next Christmas I will add another bell for hope.

Mary Rempel is a day care provider and part time copy editor. She and her husband, Dick, are active at Shalom Mennonite Fellowship. They have two adult children and three grandchildren.

Journey thoughts



by Bek Linsenmeyer

"What's the most important thing you can do for the world?" read an advertisement that recently riveted my attention. As I received articles from women who share about building bridges from the church to the world, I realize they are answering that question with their lives. They are finding, in the words of Frederick Buechner, that

"the place God calls you to
is the place where your deep gladness
and the world's deep hunger meet."

How would you describe your deep gladness and what do you perceive as the world's deep hunger? Those are ongoing questions and challenges for me. How does what I am doing in any way respond to the world's deep hunger?

Maybe we wouldn't need to be so intentional about building bridges if our churches were places people felt welcome. Unfortunately, we who are to be salt and light have done a good job of letting people know they don't meet our standards for coming in. And so we must get beyond our walls.

The response to the question, "What's the most important thing you can do for the world?" was "Be there." But how are we to be there? Each of us must find our own answer. I hope that as you read you will not only be challenged in your thinking of how you might "be there," but also be encouraged that what you have to offer is what some hungry person needs.

Bek Linsenmeyer edits *Window to Mission* from the Newton office and lives near Inman, Kan., with her husband, two children and a growing number of pets.

An attitude of acceptance

by Marlys Neufeldt

One strength of Welcome Inn Church and Community Center in Hamilton, Ont., is its open-armed acceptance of people. People with doubts and fears, debilitating physical conditions, people who have "done time," are all welcomed.

That attitude of acceptance was tested when Charlie came. Charlie had just finished serving a long prison term as a repeat sexual offender, a pedophile. The police and media made the unprecedented move of publicizing his picture and record, and that he was moving to Hamilton. The result was near hysteria in the Hamilton area. Charlie, who knew our pastor, asked to be part of our community.

Our people had understandable fears. Yet we recognized that a caring community was one of Charlie's greatest needs, given the negative publicity and his lack of any other support. Prophetic voices called us back to Jesus' words, "Let whoever is without sin cast the first stone," and "Come, you that are blessed...for I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was in prison and you visited me." So we decided to welcome Charlie, with some appropriate safeguards and boundaries in place.

Out of her meager household furnishings Eileen gave Charlie her couch and chair set. Harry visited Charlie and invited him to the Center's men's group. Darcy got together with him for meals. At Charlie's housewarming, Barry brought out his guitar and belted out some terrific blues. Even the police officer in charge of surveillance softened as he got to know Charlie's warm, kind-hearted personality. He offered to give Charlie a kitten for company!

Since then, we've also witnessed the many ways in which Charlie gives, such as at the church Thanksgiving dinner, where he cooked the turkey to feed the many who have welcomed him.

As an MVSer I wondered what service means. It means to give and to receive. To be encouraged and humbled. To recognize, as Henri Nouwen has said, that it is out of our woundedness that we are often the most genuine agents of healing. For me, it is to see Christ in the faces of Eileen, Darcy, the police officer and Charlie.

Marlys Neufeldt, while in Mennonite Voluntary Service, served as assistant pastor at Welcome Inn Church, Hamilton, Ont., for two years. She is now a student at the University of Waterloo (Ont.).

WM supports Mennonite Voluntary Service through giving to the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM).

VENTURE CLUBS-an outreach program?

by Eleanor Snyder

My question to Venture Club leaders was, **"How does your Venture Club connect with families outside of the church community?"** Here are some responses from energetic and enthusiastic club leaders in Ontario.

Building bridges with Hispanic families—First Mennonite, Kitchener: In early fall, an invitation is sent to all children who came to summer Bible school to join Venture Club. This year the numbers have swelled because Hispanic children are beginning to attend. The church offers a Hispanic Bible study at the same time Venture Club meets.

Christina, 10, became close friends with Natalia, an 11-year-old from Central America, at camp. Christina invited Natalia to Venture Club and Sunday school. Natalia's parents are very pleased with this friendship.

They are becoming more active in congregational life, reinforcing Venture Club leader Cath Woolner's belief that, "through Venture Clubs, 'fringe' people can become more involved in church life."

Building bridges with families in the community—Grace Mennonite, St. Catharines. Ed Janzen, club leader and assistant pastor at Grace, reports that their church's club program is intentional about involving parents and children who do not attend Grace Church. The kick-off event in September is a barbecue in the park for Venture Club families. In October, parents are invited to go on a hike with the club. Ed says that two issues are resolved with these family events: transportation logistics are cared for, and, more importantly, bridge building happens naturally as parents and leaders get to know each other.

Children from the congregation have invited community friends. Because of the positive club experience, parents begin attending worship services and at least two families have joined the church. An added bonus is that two of the parents have since become committed Venture Club leaders!

Through Venture Club churches can build bridges to the nonchurched community by offering parent events that coincide with club time, by encouraging children to invite their friends and by planning special events that include family members and caregivers.

Eleanor Snyder is the director of children's education for the Commission on Education (COE). She and her husband, Stuart, live in Kitchener, Ont. They are members of Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church. They have two young adult children.

WM supports the Comission on Education (COE) as they produce Venture Club materials.

Mary Brubaker-Zehr

Saturday morning cleanup in Diana Turbay, Bogota, Colombia.

Have you ever participated in a demonstration?

by Mary Brubaker-Zehr

Our Mennonite church was located on one of the three paved streets in Diana Turbay, a poor neighborhood of 80,000 in Bogota, Colombia. The church blended in so well with the surrounding row houses that if it were not for the sign on the front of the building one would have thought it was just another home.

At a church council meeting we discussed how to show our neighbors we care. What could we do that would be active? It was as if the Spirit suddenly fell upon us. Out of a myriad of ideas one came bursting forth. "That's it!" said one member. "Let's take our brooms, mops, shovels and dustpans—we will actively demonstrate to our neighbors that God loves them."

Cleanliness is very important to Colombians. Not only do they value personal cleanliness, but the cleanliness of their houses and the street in front is of utmost importance. Even a renter is concerned that their portion of sidewalk is swept and mopped.

Early one Saturday, before anyone else was out cleaning, the Diana Turbay church folk gathered with pails, mops, brooms, scrub brushes, shovels and a whole lot of spirit. We prayed, asking that God would be with us in our cleaning, and then headed out to begin our community project.

We worked hard and fast, enjoying each other. Most of all, though, we enjoyed the surprised looks as our neighbors came to their windows and doors. In their astonishment they thanked us and commented, "How nice of you to care in this way." They asked us who we were and what we were about.

Brooms and mops, shovels and dustpans—tools used to actively show God's love.

Mary Brubaker-Zehr and her husband, Scott, COM mission workers, are part of a ministry team with national pastors in Diana Turbay and Facatativa, Bogota, Colombia. Their home church is Waterloo (Ont.) North Mennonite Church. They have two children.

WM supports the work of the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) through your gifts.

ROUNDTABLE

Susan Jantzen

Building bridges from the church to the world:

Jean and Gary Isaac, mission workers in the former Transkei, now part of the Republic of South Africa, just concluded a round of Bible conferences on "Democracy and the Bible." The sessions dealt with a description of democracy and the values that are necessary to support it, concluding with illustrations from the life and teachings of Jesus. The Isaacs relate that "the time was ripe" as their country begins a new era.

Carmen Chen in Argentina, General Conference Women in Mission scholarship recipient at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary from 1989-91, reports that there is "great opportunity of sharing the Lord's gospel to the unsaved, among them a great many Chinese...flooding to Argentina weekly...whose life values are totally in vain." Carmen also sees an "urgent need for laypeople's theological education for building tomorrow's church." The Chens plan to move to Pasadena, Calif., so that Carmen's husband, Vincent, can complete his doctoral dissertation, and then return to Argentina.

WOMEN IN MISSION GROUPS!!

Reserve time during your late March or early April '95 meetings for General Conference Women in Mission business. A ballot will be sent to you in March for you to return to our office. Included will be: (1) affirmation for new publications chair, (2) constitutional changes and (3) a proposal for further cooperation and/or integration between Women in Mission (WM) and the Women's Missionary and Service Commission (WMSC) of the Mennonite Church.

We're looking for photos of bridges. We'd like to use them in *Window* with our bridge building themes. What beautiful or interesting bridges can you photograph in your area? Send color or black and white photos to *Window*, P. O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

A WM group in Moundridge, Kan., rediscovered its reason for being after almost disbanding. "We had been discouraged about younger women not joining us. But we discovered we wanted our group for some reasons of our own. We believed in what we were doing!" reported Gladys Goering, group participant and former coordinator of Women in Mission. From this self-examination emerged a new emphasis on friendship, turning half the meetings from evening study sessions into social, meal gatherings. This balance is "going great."

Susan Jantzen, WM Coordinator, lives in Newton, Kan., with her husband and two sons. They are involved in New Creation Fellowship.

Facts *and figures*

by Susan Jantzen

The Women in Ministry conference in British Columbia, May 26-28, 1995, is open to all who are interested. General Conference Women in Mission is offering two $250 travel scholarships. Please notify the WM office, 722 Main St., Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, by January 31, 1995, if you are interested.

The Hopi Mission School van was finally delivered in October. Thanks for the many Campbells' labels that were sent and for your prayer support. Labels from Campbells' products are still welcome!

***Creation Summit:* Shaping an Anabaptist Theology for Living** will be held Feb. 24-26, 1995, in Camp Lake, Wis. Anette Eisenbeis, WM publication chair, will be giving a response to one of the papers presented. Call our office at (316) 283-5100, or Lenore Waltner, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, (219) 294-7523, for details.

Our new Bible study of the Book of Hebrews, *Keep the Faith* by Brenda Martin Hurst, is receiving excellent responses. Each WM group received three copies in June. Contact the WM office if you would like additional copies. Price: $4.00 U.S., $5.00 Canadian.

PLEASE REMEMBER WOMEN IN MISSION IN YOUR YEAR-END GIVING.

	1993	1994
Feb.-Oct.	$137,320	$107,950

With our contributions behind this year, we continue to value your contributions and your prayers. May God be glorified in the work of Women in Mission.

Christmas Greetings
[illegible] WM Staff
[illegible] Bev and Doris

WINDOW SHOPPING

Looking for a way to thank retirees or former officers? Dorene Claassen, from Marlin, Wash., related that Pacific Northwest Conference WM wanted to honor past officers for their years of service. It took a bit of checking as some women had retired to new locations, but connections were made to present all these women with a house plant, a small way of remembering their contributions as Women in Mission.

"Dolls, Our Childhood Friends and Teachers" is a banquet program that will appeal to anyone who ever was or still is a child. Marilyn Unruh Flaming's engaging program uses a variety of dolls (some examples: church nursery dolls, antique dolls, Cabbage Patch dolls) as the focal point for lessons on life and faith. While the eight brief reflections, each including Scripture, invite us to be nostalgic, they also invite us to respond to God with a childlike spirit.

Request this program by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the WM office (address given below).

What successful changes have you made in meeting times and program content to respond to the needs of working women, retired women or young mothers? We'd love to pass them on. Send them to *Window* at the address listed below.

Teaching Young Children in Violent Times by Diane Levin (New Society Publishers, 1994, $16.95 paperback) helps teachers and group leaders working with prekindergarten through 3rd grade create a place where young children can learn alternatives to violent behaviors. Offers practical guidelines and methods for using puppetry, games, children's books and more to turn the classroom into a peaceful space. Available from Faith and Life Bookstore, (800) 743-2484.

FORECAST

What does it mean to be bridge builders? Our Spring issue will deal with bridge building within the church. How can we embrace diversity in the congregation? How can facing conflict be redemptive? How can women span generational and experiential differences and come together?

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt.

Abuse survivors gather in Goshen

Goshen, Ind.—Scores of women and men returned to a place where their bodies and spirits were broken by the sins of their fathers. But many left Nov. 12 with hope of retrieving a part of their souls stolen by physical and sexual abuse.

As about 300 people gathered Nov. 11-12 at College Mennonite Church here for the conference "Moving Toward Healing: Sexual Abuse and the Church," they shared stories of abuse and prayers for wholeness, exchanged hugs and roses.

Some descended into an emotional reliving of their private hells before they joined in a healing rite in which they symbolically washed away their shame, reclaimed their baptism and shared with each other "tears of corporate woundedness."

"Our numbers are far greater than the church as an institution has ever realized," said one woman, who brought her abuser's secrets to light in his home congregation. "He marked my life forever with his sin."

Many stayed or came back to the church of their victimization to find help. Others, calling themselves "outsiders," found they were "home."

"I'm not a Mennonite. I've never been in a Mennonite church before. I don't know anything about your beliefs," said a Baptist woman. "I don't think I could ever get up in a Baptist church and say, 'My dad was my pastor and he was my abuser,' so I'm going to say it here today. ... Telling is the only way we're going to live."

Yet participants gathered with feelings of frustration, discouragement, anger—even fear—for telling painful secrets.

"Like many of you, I know too much. I am frightened by anonymous letters and threatening phone calls," said Carolyn Holderread Heggen, author of *Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches* and a practicing psychotherapist. "Those of us who have brought allegations against church leaders are being called 'allegators' and are being accused of living off male church leaders, 'an already endangered species.'"

But Heggen rose above the bog of despair, calling reports of abuse "an important gift" for the church.

"By telling our stories and shattering the illusion that all is well in our homes, churches and relationships, we have forced the church to face its corporate shadow," said Heggen, who urged abuse survivors not to take responsibility for making sure church leaders "get it."

"I would beg us to stop holding ourselves hostage to the willful myopia of perpetrators and others in the church. No matter how passionate, logical and articulate we are, people cannot be forced to get something they don't want to get," she said. "Let's create our own sacred space and let's learn how to be church for each other. Too often, the church has not been a safe and just place for us."

'Telling is the only way we're going to live.'

Heggen noted that the conference convened in the place where days earlier Mennonites honored the life of the late Marlin E. Miller, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. "I am painfully aware of the toll to the body and spirit of those who confront the sin of sexual abuse," she said. "Its confrontation has taken its toll on each of us who has cared."

The gathering featured efforts by people working to make the church a safe place. Last fall, Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., launched a support group whose members remain a caring network. It also began an advocacy group to investigate a woman's experience of abuse in a church institution that had ignored her concerns for 1 1/2 years.

David Miller, instructor at Hesston (Kan.) College, described efforts beginning in 1988 at East Goshen Mennonite Church, where he formerly was co-pastor. The church launched a support group for abuse survivors.

"I am convinced that composure in the face of abuse is sin," said Miller. "We, as a denomination, have desperately been trying to regain our composure. By the grace of God, may we not." *Tom Price*

Inside the news

Couple covers U.S. and Canada to learn from church plants / p. 14

Church in India struggles with power issues / p. 15

MCC works to relieve former Yugoslavia / p. 16

Mennonites and Christian Reformed compare experiences / p. 17

A different Christmas tree / p. 18

Beginning in 1995, World Fellowship Day for the Brethren in Christ and Mennonite churches will be held the fourth Sunday in January rather than on Pentecost Sunday. The General Council of Mennonite World Conference voted in the change at meetings in Zimbabwe in July. They noted that the January date is close to the founding of the Anabaptist movement. Conrad Grebel performed the first adult baptism of the Reformation in Switzerland on Jan. 21, 1525. They also noted that the world Christian calendar designates Jan. 18-25 as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

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The Mennonite Church General Board backed off on the timetable proposed for integration with the General Conference Mennonite Church at board meetings Nov. 17-19. The group made a commitment to "move toward integration" but postponed when this would happen by removing the year 2003 from the current proposal in favor of making a decision on the target date in 1997 or 1999. The MC General Board's desire to push back the timetable will go to the Integration Exploration Committee, which will bring a final recommendation to both MC and GC general boards in the spring. If approved, that recommendation will go to delegates at the joint MC/GC gathering in Wichita, Kan., in July 1995. (*Gospel Herald*)

Moderator mobilizes to hear churches

The road to understanding: *Darrell and Loretta Fast spent two months crisscrossing the United States and Canada to learn from General Conference church plants of years past.*

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—A belief that congregations are the building blocks of a denomination, and an interest in the experiences of urban Mennonite churches sent Darrell and Loretta Fast on a 7,100-mile trip this fall. Darrell is pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., and the General Conference moderator.

From Sept. 16 to Nov. 11, the Fasts visited 14 urban churches that belong to the General Conference Mennonite Church in the following states and provinces: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, South Dakota, Minnesota, Oregon, California, Colorado, Arizona and Washington.

Their primary purpose was to listen and learn from the experiences of Mennonite churches that had been planted in cities from 1950 to 1970. The General Conference started about 50 churches during this 20-year period. In addition, the Fasts visited two churches that were planted in the late 1970s.

"Our Laughing with Abraham and Sarah resolution calls for the General Conference to plant 50 urban congregations during this last decade of the 20th century. We would do well to learn from our past successes," said Darrell.

"For example, what might an earlier generation of Mennonite 'urban pioneers' teach us about reaching out to our non-Mennonite neighbors today? What can they teach us about reaching our own children with the Christian faith?" he added.

The Fasts were both troubled and surprised by what they found. Of the 14 churches they visited, at least one-quarter are experiencing a decline in membership. The Mountainview Mennonite Church in Vancouver, which had reached a membership of close to 200 at one point, now has under 100 members. One member told the Fasts that it felt like the church is going to seed. However, another member noted that this might be the only way the church would be able to grow again.

Yet the strength of the leaders and members impressed the Fasts. They were moved by the stories of people who were involved in forming the new congregations.

"They could simply have attended another church. But they believed in the importance of the Mennonite approach to faith," said Loretta.

"The charter members are some of the unsung heroes," agreed Darrell, noting how "they stayed with the church through thick and thin." He shared how one member of Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis has

Aid to Christian Teaching, a weekend Sunday school teacher training event, will be held at Inspiration Hills Retreat Center in northwest Iowa, March 24-26, 1995. The event is sponsored by the Northern District Conference and the Iowa-Nebraska Conference. Contact Ken Hawkley at (316) 283-5100.

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United Airlines is the official airline for Wichita '95, the upcoming joint conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. Any travel agent can arrange for a 5 percent discount on the lowest available fare by using the following contract number: 590B1.

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A United Nations report gives life on Earth a mixed review. *Worldwatch* magazine reports on the U.N.'s Human Development Report 1994, described as a "50-year report card for the human condition." The report notes improvements in nutrition, life expectancy, literacy, expanded democracy and a reduced threat of nuclear holocaust. The report says that by the 1990s only 32 percent of the world's population lived in "abysmal" conditions, compared to 70 percent in 1960. But the report also says the gap between rich and poor has widened. In 1960 the poorest fifth of the world's people earned one-thirtieth that of the richest fifth. By 1990 the fraction fell to one-sixtieth. Military spending has not decreased. By 1992 world military spending was $815 billion, equal to the combined income of half the world's population. Cash keeps flowing from poor to rich countries. Industrial countries sent $60 billion in development assistance to poor countries in 1992, but poor countries paid back $160 billion to service their debts at the same time. Both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund received more from impoverished countries in the past two years than they loaned out. (*The Marketplace*)

struggled over the years to find ways to explain his church experience to the members of the rural church he grew up in.

World War II was pivotal in shaping North American Mennonite life and witness in cities, said Darrell. Many Mennonites who joined Civilian Public Service left rural areas for urban ones. Some of them chose to continue to live in cities after World War II ended due to the opportunities for further education, work, service.

What might an earlier generation of Mennonite 'urban pioneers' teach us?

"In the process, they discovered that the city is a viable place to work and raise a family," he said.

The level of outreach surprised the Fasts. Ten out of the 14 congregations participated in the Living in Faithful Evangelism process. Many operate Mennonite Central Committee Self-Help Craft stores. "They see the stores as an important part of their service and identity," said Darrell.

Others work with interdenominational projects. The 70-member Lethbridge (Alta.) Mennonite Church participates in a soup kitchen together with about 30 other churches.

A number are reaching out to new ethnic groups as well. At Grace Mennonite Church in Regina, Sask., Caucasian and Laotian members worship together. The church also has a separate Chinese worship service.

"There is a tendency to be preoccupied with numbers when it comes to church planting," said Darrell. "From visiting these churches, we learned that the road isn't always smooth sailing.

"We need to be more patient about how long it takes for a congregation to be established. We shouldn't expect instant results," said Darrell. "A church is not essentially established until it is facing second-generation issues."

He also noted that "we need to do more to be an inclusive community. These urban congregations have accepted people as they are. They are open to diversity." The Fasts' trip was made possible with a grant provided by the Schowalter Foundation. *Carla Reimer*

Power struggles plague church in India

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Lubin Jantzen, Newton, Kan., and Larry Kehler, Winnipeg, reported that their recent visit to churches in central India that relate to the General Conference Mennonite Church was mixed with pain and joy.

While Kehler and Jantzen were impressed with the vitality of the individuals who belong to the 5,500-member Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church (BGCMC) and their evangelism efforts, they were saddened by the conflicts among various leaders.

At a Nov. 2-5 meeting, delegates representing 19 of the 23 BGCMC churches gave a "no confidence" vote to the chair and vice chair despite pleas from long-time leader Samuel Stephen. Neither the chair nor the vice chair was present at the November meeting. The delegates voted new officers to all the leadership positions. The original leaders have declared that the Nov. 2-5 meeting is unconstitutional and have subsequently filed a lawsuit.

"It was hard to understand how there could be so much turmoil at the institutional level when we met so many Christians who were stalwart proclaimers and stewards of God's righteousness and love," said Kehler, who is the secretary for Asia for the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

However, several pastors did share possible reasons for the leadership struggles, including the following:

- people who were corrupt were attracted to the leadership positions because of the money that was available through mission agencies (the churches contribute 70 percent of the BGCMC budget, and over the years there have been embelement charges);
- people wanted to be leaders because of the possibility of foreign travel to events such as Mennonite World Conference and the Asia Mennonite Conference;
- a number of church members have retired from government work and are eager to seek power in the church.

One young man shared how he likes

Continued on page 16

The Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. The church also affirmed going off Western District Conference's home mission committee subsidy at the end of 1994.

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Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 1995. Four churches "spawned" by the congregation in the last 33 years will join in the celebration. The main celebration is planned for July 14-16, 1995. Church members will house visiting guests. David Friesen has prepared a history book, *Journey of Faith*, available for $30 Cdn., plus shipping. Order the book from Bill Braun, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Box 1207, Winkler, MB R6W 4B2.

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Empty Tomb, Inc., which measures charitable giving by Christians in the United States, has just released a study of 29 denominations' giving patterns through 1992. The report shows that average church-member giving fell for the second consecutive year in 1992. Giving to both congregational finances and benevolences dropped. The report merged data of 100,000 reports from the estimated 350,000 congregations in the United States, representing 30 million members. Giving from 1991 to 1992 rose slightly in current dollar terms, but fell in constant dollar terms. Reflecting past experience, giving to church work outside the local church fell more sharply than giving to the local church. Giving as a portion of income also fell. In 1968, per-member giving as a percentage of income was 3.14 percent. By 1992 it fell to 2.52 percent. Denominations associated with the National Association of Evangelicals fared better than those associated with the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. But both groups lost ground compared to past giving. The Mennonite Church was included in the study; the General Conference was not.

"People ask me all the time how I can deal with rapists, child molesters and violent offenders," Ray Ramsey told Bluffton (Ohio) College students at a forum Nov. 29. "I don't. I deal with human beings." Ramsey directs the prerelease program for Bluffton College at Allen Correctional Institution. The classes give inmates advice on writing résumés, interviewing skills, goal setting and other life-coping skills. Thirteen hundred inmates have attended the classes.

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A Christian Peacemaker Teams group in St. Paul, Minn., held its second annual Alternative Toy Fair in mid-November to give children alternatives to violent Christmas toys. The fair gave parents, teachers and children a chance to see and buy toys that encourage cooperation, tolerance and creativity. This year's fair emphasized nonviolent computer and video games. The Science Museum of Minnesota brought computers and displayed educational software programs. A local children's radio station sent disc jockeys to the event.

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Mennonite Central Committee moved from fifth-best relief and development agency last year to second this year in *Money* magazine's annual ranking of the efficiency of various U.S. charities. More significant, perhaps, is the acknowledgment MCC received from the heads of other relief and development agencies. This year the magazine asked the heads of 111 large U.S. charities to rate their peers anonymously. Only a third did so, but those who did "gave consistently high marks to two lesser-known relief and development charities: Mennonite Central Committee and Habitat for Humanity International," *Money* reports in its December issue. "We're honored by the peer-rating," said John Lapp, MCC executive secretary. "Our ranking in *Money* magazine will likely go up and down over the years, but our peers see the long-term results of our work. They see our workers and volunteers in action."

the Mennonite theology, but he is not comfortable with the way BGCMC is practicing it. The man does evangelism work for BGCMC without financial support. Others are so tired of the conflicts that they refuse to attend the annual conferences.

Jantzen, a long-term mission worker in India, noted that many other denominations located in north and central India face similar power struggles. "Many churches are using schemes and campaigns similar to what is done at the level of the government," he said.

Jantzen noted that many churches throughout history have had serious conflicts. "What stands out in my mind is the fact that a Mennonite church exists in the state of Madhya Pradesh (M.P.), where 70 years ago there were no churches and only a few scattered Christians. That is a testimony to the handiwork of God," said Jantzen.

Hopeful signs: He noted that there seems to be more openness to Christianity in India, even though only about 4 percent of the population is Christian. Jantzen thinks that the hospitals and the primary and secondary schools that were started by the Mennonite missionaries have played and continue to play an important role in the witness of BGCMC.

"These institutions encouraged people to look below the surface of Christianity," he said. In fact, many Mennonite church members, who came from poor and lower-caste families, are now leaders within their communities.

The last long-term COM missionaries left India in 1989. India no longer grants residence visas for missionaries. COM no longer provides a subsidy for BGCMC's overall budget, although COM has earmarked money for a special outreach project in the state of Orissa.

The outreach efforts of a number of young evangelists in Orissa and Madhya Pradesh impressed Kehler and Jantzen. Through their preaching and singing, the evangelists are attracting new believers to the church. BGCMC has accepted 196 new members from the state of Orissa. This group of believers asked to join the BGCMC several years ago.

Kehler said he will remember the faith of the church members he visited for a long time. Dukhni Bai, an 85-year-old woman from Korba, M.P., who sang a rousing solo at one of the church services, and Ratan Lal Masih, an evangelist from Champa, M.P., who witnesses as he travels on his bicycle, are two examples of the "many shining lights I met on my trip," he said. *Carla Reimer*

MCC works to relieve war-torn former Yugoslavia

Akron, Pa. (MCC)— Mennonite Central Committee is working to get relief supplies to people in need in former Yugoslavia. MCC is releasing funds to purchase 30 metric tons of wheat flour for people in the town of Gradacac, Bosnia.

Duhovna Stvarnost, a partner agency based in Zagreb, Croatia, also alerted MCC that its warehouses and wallet are empty, in part because international attention has been focused on Rwanda. Duhovna Stvarnost is a publishing house, run by Christians, that began relief work after war broke out in the former Yugoslavia. One of MCC's first workers to Yugoslavia helped start the agency some 20 years ago.

Reports indicate the town of Bihac is running out of food and supplies. Getting assistance into Bihac has been impossible up to the present, but a consortium of organizations planned to send the first in a series of aid convoys Dec. 3. The agencies hope their combined clout will convince United Nations Protection Forces and Bosnian Serb authorities to allow the convoy's safe passage into Bihac. MCC will help in whatever way it can with this effort, says Hansulrich Gerber, MCC Europe secretary.

Powder keg: Meanwhile, Gradacac is located in an area "that until recently was seen as even more potentially explosive than Bihac," Gerber says. It lies near the corridor linking Serbs of central and western Bosnia with Serbian areas and towns northeast of Sarajevo, and also with Serbia proper. If combined Croat/Muslim forces close this corridor, Gerber expects war to reignite throughout Bosnia. Ivan Vacek of Duhovna Stvarnost has frequently transported relief food and supplies to the Bosnian towns of Gradacac and Olovo.

Anxiety levels in Gradacac and other towns is increasing as winter ap-

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Middleman of relief: *Ivan Vacek looks through MCC school kits at Duhovna Stvarnost's Zagreb warehouse in mid-October. The warehouse is now nearly empty. Vacek is managing director of Duhovna Stvarnost.*

proaches, Gerber says. "Winter is hard in Bosnia. Once transportation into the region becomes difficult and if humanitarian organizations are preoccupied with other hot spots, it won't take much for some of these towns to become desperate. Some fear people will get to a point of starvation."

So far in 1994, MCC has provided the following resources to Duhovna Stvarnost for Bosnian relief: $27,200 Cdn./$20,000 U.S. to purchase staple food items; a 20-foot container of school kits and soap; and a $6,800 Cdn./$5,000 U.S. contribution to a large Canadian Food Grains Bank shipment. An additional $13,600 Cdn./$10,000 U.S. will cover the cost of the wheat flour and transportation.

"We are prepared to send another shipment of school kits and soap in early 1995," Gerber says. "The recently delivered school kits have been extremely appreciated."

Mennonites, Christian Reformed compare notes

Kitchener, Ont. (Meetinghouse)—Sixty Mennonite and Christian Reformed church leaders compared their experience of church Nov. 16 here at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate. The dialogue preceded the annual meeting of the Canadian Council of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Moderators.

Eight discussion groups reflected on how they experienced life in their local congregations and on challenges facing their denominations.

Participants learned that a strong cultural heritage continues to influence both communions. Arie Van Eek, executive secretary of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, said that their Canadian churches had grown from nine in 1947 to 250 congregations in 12 "classes" or presbyteries today, primarily due to post-war immigration and biological growth.

In comparison, there are about 400 Canadian Mennonite congregations, which are among the largest groups represented under the Mennonite Central Committee umbrella, most retaining a strong European heritage.

The tension between outreach and community resonated for both bodies. One participant observed that growing Christian Reformed churches feature strong lay participation and leadership, and he noted that one such congregation of 60 families utilizes 20 elders to enhance one-on-one support systems for members.

Ethnicity: Both Mennonite and Christian Reformed people noted tendencies to focus inwardly, though Canadian Christian Reformed churches have moved aggressively to shed their "Dutch" label—to "break out of the immigrant mentality," in the words of London, Ont., pastor Harry Bierman. In southern Ontario, for example, out of 60 congregations, only one Dutch-language worship service—held every three weeks—survives.

Mennonites expressed appreciation for the Christian Reformed outreach to the Canadian middle class, while Christian Reformed applauded the Mennonite strength in Christian testimony through social witness to the less advantaged, particularly refugee groups.

Both denominations face the challenge of living with disagreement among members. For Christian Reformed congregations the "hot" issue in recent years has been ordination of women for congregational leadership. Some Mennonites suggested their potentially most divisive issue is homosexuality.

Both groups wondered about their ability to change in response to the gifts and differing experiences of new members from outside the cultural heritage, how to retain the loyalty of

Five Herald Press books will be published in Russian in Moscow under the auspices of Mennonite Central Committee. MCC hopes to assist Russian-speaking pastors and priests with the books. The titles are *Genesis* by Eugene F. Roop, *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice* by Howard Zehr, *A Declaration on Peace: In God's People the World's Renewal Has Begun*, edited by Douglas Gwyn, George Hunsinger, Eugene F. Roop and John H. Yoder, *An Introduction to Mennonite History* by C.J. Dyck and *Soviet Evangelicals Since World War II* by Walter Sawatsky.

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Elfrieda and Peter Dyck arrived home in Akron, Pa., on Nov. 24. Elfrieda, 77, suffered a severe stroke Nov. 3. She was hospitalized in Lethbridge, Alta., for three weeks. Elfrieda was admitted to Lancaster (Pa.) Community Hospital on Nov. 29 for an additional week of physical therapy. The couple was two months into a storytelling tour across Canada and the United States in commemoration of Mennonite Central Committee's 75th anniversary when the stroke occurred.

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Alumni of Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite voluntary service European programs invite former colleagues and their families to join them in Europe next summer for two events in Berlin, Germany. A reunion on July 15, 1995, and an MCC 75th anniversary celebration on July 16 will bring together former workers now living in Germany, Holland, Canada and the United States. Two tours are planned. "European Pax Tour: the Soldiers of Compassion Return" will be led by Calvin Redekop, who was the first director of Pax. "European Health-Care Exchange '95," led by Joe Landis and Aldred Neufeldt, will take participants to meet policy-makers and visit institutions in four countries to learn about various European approaches to health care. For information call (800) 565-0451.

young people, and how best to discern Scripture's direction for the church in an age when "spirituality" is OK but propositional "truth" is suspect. One of the minority of women at the gathering observed that everyone present was white.

Participants noted the narrowing gap between the two denominations on matters of peace. Christian Reformed representatives said they admire Mennonite active nonviolence as they re-evaluate the just war theory, while not being able to say "there is no case for government intervention." Participants also noted differing approaches to the Old Testament. Mennonites read the Old Testament through the words of Jesus.

Rudy Baergen, pastor at First Mennonite Church here, called for the two groups to hear their diversities with appreciation. For Mennonites, he said, this means greater appreciation for the Christian Reformed emphasis on the sovereignty of God. A Christian Reformed pastor called for further exchanges of speakers—for Mennonites to speak about "Christian community" in Christian Reformed settings.

Robert Haven, co-moderator for the dialogue and a Christian Reformed pastor in London, commented that "Mennonite gentleness is a strength and weakness." He hoped the Christian Reformed won't pursue continued dialogue too aggressively, with Mennonites then withdrawing.
Sam Steiner

Bombs replace ornaments on a Lancaster church's Christmas tree

Lancaster, Pa. (MCC)—Bethel Mennonite Church here housed a different kind of Christmas tree this year. Instead of a tree decked with colorful lights and sparkling tinsel, 40 miniature replicas of cluster bomblets, known as bombies, hung from the branches.

The bombies were meant to draw attention to Mennonite Central Committee's bomb removal project in Laos. With each $13 Cdn./$10 U.S. donation for MCC, one bombie was replaced with a dove.

Diane Black and other project planners thought it would take at least four weeks to clear the tree of the bombies. Much to their surprise, the tree was transformed in two short weeks.

"We underestimated the giving power of the people in our church," Black said. With all 40 bombies gone, Black hoped the congregation would continue donating money. "We want wall-to-wall doves," she said.

WAR
BAG
for disposal
Forever?

Mark Beach/MCC

Ornaments of hope: *Decorating the tree at Bethel Mennonite Church are Diane Black (left), Joseph Mozloom (back), Carol Martin (right) and Deb Nissley (front).*

Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, Texas, has entered into an associate membership relationship with the Southern Plains District of the Church of the Brethren. Church of the Brethren members moving into the Dallas area will be encouraged to visit and participate at Peace Mennonite.

• • •

Gloria Neufeld Redekop is beginning a research project focusing on Mennonite women in Russia during World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution, the civil war, years of famine and the first years of immigration to Canada. Redekop recently received her Ph.D. from University of Ottawa. She is seeking information about people to interview or diaries, letters, biographies or journals that reflect these experiences. Contact her at 5 Beddoe Lane, Gloucester, ON, K1B 3X9, phone/fax (613) 837-4218, e-mail az651@freenet.Carleton.ca

• • •

Developers transforming Adolf Hitler's East Prussian command post, the Wolf's Lair, into a tourist site in what is now Poland deny that they are creating a Disneyland for neo-Nazis. Klaus Bachmann writes in Vienna's *Die Presse* that Hitler's guest house has been made into a hotel. Plaques installed to commemorate the role of the resistance have been removed. The nearby city of Ketrzyn, Poland, has a 20-percent stake in the tourist operation. Mayor Ryszard Przybylinski explains, "Of course, we do not want to glorify the war, but the most important thing is a source of income." In the first six months of 1994, 27,000 Poles and 19,300 from outside Poland visited the barracks and bunkers. (*World Press Review*)

Record

AMBS—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

DEATHS

Tammy Hostetler, 27, a Mennonite Voluntary Service worker at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., died unexpectedly Nov. 28. She taught fourth grade at the school. She was a member of Inman (Kan.) Church.

MINISTERS

Richard Bucher was installed Sept. 11 as pastor at North Danvers Church, Danvers, Ill.

Rosie Epp was installed Oct. 30 as co-pastor at Zion Church, Souderton, Pa.

Patrick Farran is youth minister for Lombard (Ill.) Church.

David Morrow was licensed and installed Oct. 30 as pastor at Warden (Wash.) Church.

Jeni Hiett Umble is serving as a pastoral intern at Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind.

Mark Weidner has resigned his position as Central District Conference minister, effective late spring 1995. He will become conference minister for the Ohio Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Calvin Yoder was installed Oct. 30 as co-pastor at Zion Church, Souderton, Pa.

WORKERS

Amy Bender, Cassel Church, Tavistock, Ont., is beginning a two-year MCC term in Winnipeg as a child-care worker.

Claude Boyer has been named editor of the *Central District Reporter*, replacing **Evelyn Krehbiel**, who has completed 17 years as editor.

Frieda Derksen, Bergthal Church, Didsbury, Alta., began a four-month MCC term in September in Akron, Pa. She serves as an assistant cook at Nav Jiwan Tea Room. Derksen previously served as Self-Help Crafts director for Alberta.

Steven L. Fath has resigned as recruitment director for AMBS.

Beth Hennessy, Peoria, Ill., has been named by the Kitchener (Ont.) Inter-Church Chaplaincy Committee as chaplain for families struggling with mental illness.

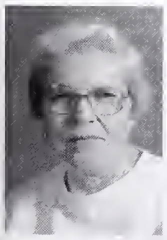
Helen Loewen, Good News Church, Winnipeg, began a 2 1/2-month MCC term in October in Akron, Pa., as a returns clerk in the consignment warehouse of Self-Help Crafts of the World. She previously served for three months as a nurse at Kalene Hospital in Zambia.

Willard Swartley, professor of New Testament at AMBS, will begin as dean there in summer 1995.

Bender

Derksen

Epp


Loewen

Swartley

Yoder

Mennonite Aid Plan of the Pacific Coast (a fire and casualty company) is looking for a dynamic **general manager** with experience in marketing to the insurance industry. Knowledge of reinsurance, industry reporting requirements and ability to motivate people are critical. Résumés accepted until Feb. 15, 1995. Position will be filled before June 1, 1995. Offices located in Reedley, Calif., serving five western states. Qualifications and job description available upon request. Salary and benefits commensurate with experience and education.

Reply to: **Vern Warkentin, 18685 E. Floral Ave., Reedley, CA 93654.**

Over 2,000 Salvadorans gathered for an all-night vigil on the fifth anniversary of the killing of six Jesuit priests and two women co-workers. The vigil was held at the Jesuit-run Central American University, where the eight were killed by a Salvadoran army unit Nov. 16, 1989. A university statement described a widespread disenchantment in the country. "With the peace accords and the end of the war," it said, "it seemed we could almost touch that which we had so long hoped for. But it hasn't turned out that way. ... the structure of the country continues to be as unjust and irrational as it was before the [peace] accords." (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Mennonite Central Committee plans to sell plates, trains, trucks and tractors next year at relief sales to commemorate MCC's 75th anniversary. The MCC Fordson tractor is a 1/16th scale model of tractors MCC sent to the Soviet Union in 1922. Five hundred will be cast. The story of the train boxcar goes back to 1959, when Jan Gleysteen was asked to design an MCC boxcar for the children's magazine *Words of Cheer* to be used as a bank to save money for MCC. A hobby shop owner saw the artwork and made a limited run of the car. Three other model manufacturers followed suit. The car was last produced in the 1970s. Interest in a new run was sparked when a model railroad magazine published a photo of the MCC boxcar owned by Loren Neufeld of Houston. With the support of the Mid-Texas Relief Sale, Neufeld has arranged to make a run of 300 N-scale cars from Micro-Trains. The MCC portable meat canner was created in Virginia in 1945 to can meat for men serving in Civilian Public Service. Six hundred models of the canning truck have been made. A limited number of these Winross canning trucks are now available from local meat canning committees for $100 U.S. Seventy-five pewter plates have also been made. A few of each item will be auctioned at relief sales across North America in 1995.

Growing, energetic church in thriving southern Manitoba community is looking for a full-time, leading pastor. Starting date is negotiable.

Send résumés or inquiries to: **Pastoral Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 960 Pembina Ave., Winkler, MB R6W 1X4**.

Winter conferences for business professionals and entrepreneurs will be held in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Feb. 3-4, 1995, and Phoenix March 16-20, 1995. The General Conference Mennonite Church is sponsoring events, which include fellowship, learning, golf and food! You'll learn to know how others in business handle success and problems. Participants will share how a relationship with the church can help in business and how your leadership can enhance your church and conference.

Call or write **Gary Franz** for a brochure: **(316) 283-5100** or **General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347**.

Bluffton College Department of Family and Consumer Sciences seeks a **dietetics program director** and **assistant/associate professor of food, nutrition and dietetics**. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate nutrition courses in ADA-approved didactic program in dietetics, program director for DPD program, advise students, supervise clinical experience, participate in committee work, professional organizations and dietetic program development. Successful candidates hold an advanced degree in nutrition, dietetics, nutritional biochemistry, or closely related field; PhD preferred. RD, LD clinical experience required, along with successful teaching experience and demonstrated ability for scholarly research. Full-time, tenure-track position begins March 1 or Sept. 1, 1995. Review of applications begins Jan. 17, 1995, until appointment is made. Class presentation required of all applicants invited to interview.

Submit letter of application, résumé or vita, three letters of reference and unofficial transcripts to **Donald L. Pannabecker, vice president and dean of academic affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817.** Equal Opportunity Employer

FRESNO PACIFIC COLLEGE

ANNOUNCES AN EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

TITLE: Academic Vice President for Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College.

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DUTIES: Provides intellectual and academic leadership of the educational program, which includes instructional and academic support functions, and the student development program. Articulates the academic mission of the institution internally and externally and is an advocate for faculty within institutional governance. Member of the President's Cabinet, chair of the academic cabinet and staff liaison to the academic commission of the board of trustees. Responsible for budget preparation and budget management of the educational programs, and for faculty personnel functions, including recruitment, evaluation, policies and their implementation, faculty salary determination and contracts.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Earned doctorate
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- Demonstrated excellence as a teacher in a college or university setting
- Administrative experience
- Clear understanding of and commitment to the theological distinctives and mission of the college, including its foundation in the Anabaptist Believers' Church tradition
- Evidence of scholarly achievement
- Ability to represent the institution effectively to its various constituencies

COLLEGE DESCRIPTION: Fresno Pacific College is an evangelical liberal arts college sponsored by the Mennonite Brethren Church. The college offers the associate of arts, bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees. Undergraduates number approximately 800, and graduate students 800. The college is accredited as a senior college by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Fresno Pacific is known for its academic excellence, strong sense of campus community and Christian commitment. All employees of the college must be able to support the theological orientation of the college and express a personal Christian commitment.

STARTING DATE: July 1, 1995

SALARY: Near the mean for type and size of institution. Health, life and LTD insurance, TIAA/CREF retirement options, 4 weeks vacation, moving expenses, tuition waivers.

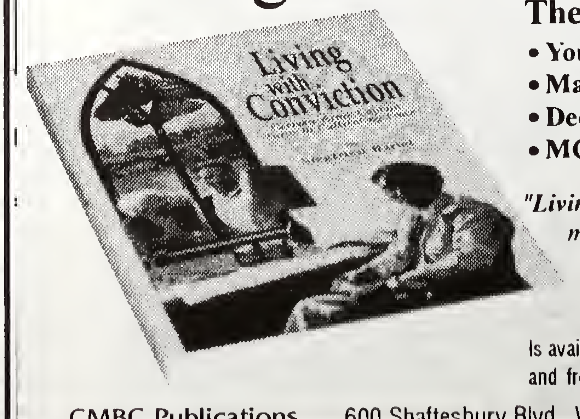
APPLICATION: Send letter of application and résumé to: **Sue Kliewer, Personnel Director, Fresno Pacific College, 1717 S. Chestnut, Fresno, CA 93702.**

Review of applications will begin Jan. 15, 1995. Review will continue until position is filled.

Fresno Pacific College provides equal opportunity for employment without regard for race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap. Women and members of minority groups are encouraged to apply.

Living with Conviction

The memoirs of Siegfried Bartel:



- **Young man who went to war for Germany**
- **Master farmer and community activist**
- **Dedicated husband and father**
- **MCC board member and peace advocate**

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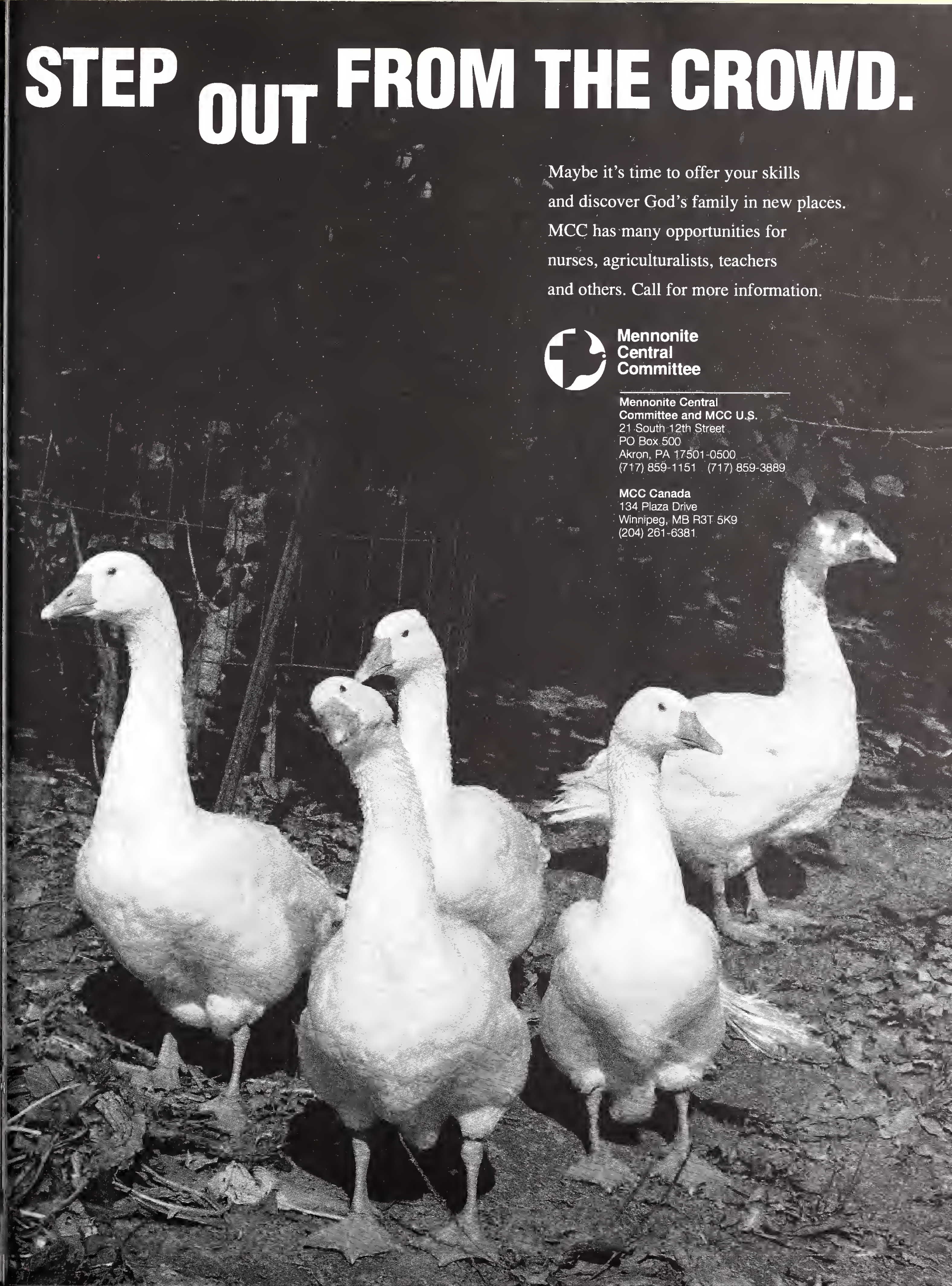

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MCC Canada
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BOOKS

FAITHFUL CARE FOR EARTH

Cherish the Earth: The Environment and Scripture *by Janice E. Kirk and Donald R. Kirk (Herald Press, 1993, 183 pages)*

Reviewed by Laura L. Cossey, Newton, Kan.

Cherish the Earth
The Environment and Scripture
Janice E. Kirk & Donald R. Kirk

Christians searching for ways to respond to environmental problems often have a difficult time finding a cohesive environmental agenda in the Bible. In *Cherish the Earth*, Christian naturalists Janice E. and Donald R. Kirk say that even though the Bible has been used to justify ravaging the environment, it actually calls for Earth stewardship. They stress that the Bible's lack of emphasis on the environment does not mean people have no responsibility for the condition of the creation: "The Earth, to the writers of the Bible, was not lost. *People* were lost. …"

The book has three parts. In the first part the Kirks present biblical passages that negate the myth of the natural world as something wild to be tamed by humankind. They say, "We do well to remember that when God finished his creation, the world was a work of art, crafted with care and beautiful to look upon. God was pleased with it and called it good." In part two they explain the role of the natural world in God's plan of redemption and salvation, and in part three they show that, from the foundations of the faith, Christianity calls for Earth stewardship, even though the Bible does not say explicitly, "Go forth and save the Earth."

What impressed me most about this book is its adaptability to study groups. The authors have filled a need for a resource that will not only enlighten Christians but spur them into action. Each of the 15 chapters is followed by a section of discussion questions. The last chapter focuses solely on how Christians can implement a "ministry of praise" toward the Earth, and thus take responsibility for the creation that God has given us.

FRIEDMAN LITE

How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems *by Peter L. Steinke (Alban Institute, Suite 433 North, 4550 Montgomery Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814; 1993)*

Reviewed by Dave Rogalsky, Milverton, Ont.

How many people have told you, "Read Friedman's *Generation to Generation*"? But you haven't because you looked at the price or the size of the book? Well here is "Friedman Lite." At least, that's what some have called it. Steinke has done us a great favor by taking the ideas of Edwin Friedman, Murray Bowen and other systems theorists and presenting them in a way that the average pastor or motivated parishioner should be able to understand.

Systems theory (oversimplified) believes that all people act in relationships that can be studied, and in order to improve the health of one individual, relationships need to be addressed. Truly, "no one is an island."

That is one-third of systems theory. Another third is that mature individuals must take responsibility for themselves and their half of all their relationships. The last third tries to describe healthy ways of being self while being in relationship.

Steinke, like Friedman, applies these ideas to congregations. But, because he is a member of the Lutheran clergy and has done consulting work with congregations in trouble, his examples and ideas are more specific than Friedman's.

Particularly helpful to me was his last chapter, "Believing and Belonging," a look at systems thinking from a theological perspective. He echoes David Augsburger's perspective on forgiveness not as a demand that the other change before I begin to forgive, but also not a minimizing of the offense. "We forgive to restore a relationship, not to relieve our own anxiety."

The comment on anxiety is telling. According to Steinke and other systems thinkers, anxiety drives human relationships. But it is not the

TULIP TIME IN HOLLAND
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Our Dutch Mennonite tour leaders, Pieter and Martha Gotwals Postma, will welcome you at the height of the spring flower season. By boat, bike (if you like) and motorcoach, they will introduce you to their homeland, from the Delta to Friesland.

Come with us to Europe in 1995. Write or call for itineraries.

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European Anabaptist Heritage	July 5-21	John Ruth & Ruth Jantzi
European PAX	July 10-26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes

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anxiety that needs to be dealt with. Rather our responses to anxiety are what must be faced. Do we jump when someone complains, trying to do what they want because of our anxiety? Or do we freeze, unable to do anything? Or can we sit down with them and examine the complaint and together with them work at the bigger picture?

A strength of the book is that Steinke can draw on many case histories to describe the theory and to suggest ways to apply it to our own situation. The first five chapters describe the theory and the last five chapters apply it to congregations.

This is a practical book. I consider using it with my leaders both to slow down "reactivity" and to encourage less recalcitrance.

POP AMISH

Plain and Amish: An Alternative to Modern Pessimism *by Bernd G. Längin (Herald Press, 1994, 426 pages)*

Reviewed by Steve Nolt, South Bend, Ind.

Bernd Längin has written a panoramic portrayal of Amish life. In semipopular journalistic style he presents Amish history, culture and religious beliefs in one volume.

While gathering material for the book, Längin lived among the Old Order Amish of Allen County, Ind. He also visited other Amish communities. *Plain and Amish* is a revision and translation of a work he published in German in 1990.

A German journalist living in Winnipeg, Längin has worked as an editor for expatriate German newspapers and has authored numerous books on ethnic groups of German origin. His own color and black-and-white photographs illustrate this and other volumes. The book's journalistic style and accessible English translation make it pleasant reading. However, this style also tends toward an interest in the offbeat and to repetition of material.

The book's 10 chapters focus alternately on the present and the past. Längin includes a significant amount of 16th-century Anabaptist history along with some later developments in the Amish story. Other chapters explore contemporary Amish worship services, farming practices, family patterns, weddings, schools and views of death. Längin presents both flattering and embarrassing aspects of Amish life.

The book also includes a helpful map, timetable and bibliography. A section titled "Biblical Principles of Amish Faith" offers scriptural support for various Amish practices. While not exhaustive, it includes many key texts.

The book contains a number of troubling factual errors. Among them is the assertion that "over half of the younger LaGrange [County, Ind., Old Order Amish] generation leaves the Amish" to join other churches. Actually, careful records of the LaGrange-Elkhart Old Order Amish settlement show a youth retention rate of about 90 percent. Some material on the Amish and the state is inaccurate, and much of the history on page 244 is jumbled and confusing. Most other misstatements, while bothersome, are less significant.

Resources

- **The Turning Point: How Persons of Conscience Brought About Major Change in the Care of America's Mentally Ill** by Alex Sareyan (Herald Press, 1994, $16.95 U.S./$24.25 Cdn.) includes excerpts from *Life* and *Reader's Digest*, as well as reminiscences of Civilian Public Service workers.
- **Daniel** by Paul M. Lederach (Herald Press, 1994, $17.95 U.S./$25.75 Cdn.), the sixth volume in the Believers Church Bible Commentary series, presents the stories and dream-visions of Daniel.
- **Beyond the News: Firearms Violence** (Mennonite Board of Missions Media Ministries, 1994, $24.95 U.S./$34.95 Cdn.), a 30-minute discussion video, is the first in a three-part series on violence (the next two will be available March 1995). To order call (800) 999-3534 or write Media Ministries, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801-2497.
- **Information packets on violent toys** have been collected by Christian Peacemaker Teams. Topics are general information for individuals and congregations, how to plan an alternative toy fair, and nonviolent computer software. To order, contact CPT, Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60608-6508; phone and fax (312) 455-1199; e-mail cpt@igc.apc.org.
- **Well-Intentioned Dragons: Ministering to Problem People in the Church** by Marshall Shelley (Bethany House, 1994, $8.99 U.S.) provides real-life stories and tested strategies to help pastors minister effectively in hostile conditions.
- **The Challenge of Shalom**, edited by Murray Polner and Naomi Goodman (New Society Publishers, 1994, $18.95 U.S.), contains essays from leading Jewish thinkers on the origins, practice and theory of Jewish nonviolence.
- **A Keeper of the Word: Selected Writings of William Stringfellow**, edited by Bill Wylie Kellermann (Eerdmans, 1994, $24.99 U.S.), includes never-before published material, autobiographical writings, writings on the principalities and powers, and a complete bibliography of Stringfellow's work.
- **Amazing Space: Opening Doors to Community Ministry** by Valjean McLenighan (Inspired Partnerships, 53 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 852, Chicago, IL 60604, 312-294-0077; $6 U.S. each, or $3 each for 10 or more copies) is a guide for implementing space-sharing arrangements for community ministry.
- **The Bonhoeffers: Portrait of a Family** by Sabine Leibholz-Bonhoeffer (Covenant Publications, 3200 W. Foster Ave., Chicago, IL 60625, 312-478-4676) gives a look at the Bonhoeffer family through the eyes of the author, the twin sister of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.
- **Spirituality in an Age of Change: Rediscovering the Spirit of the Reformers** by Alister E. McGrath (Zondervan, 1994, $16.99 U.S.) invites dialogue with the past to rediscover how it can help clarify the confusion of the modern world.
- **Books that Build Character: A Guide to Teaching Your Child Moral Values through Stories** by William Kilpatrick and Gregory and Suzanne Wolfe (Touchstone Books/Simon & Schuster, 1994, $11 U.S.) is a guide to family books that explore moral ground, enhancing the reader's imagination and conscience.

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Editorial

Show it, don't stow it

Don't stow it, show it. Don't disguise it, advertise it. Imagine an owner of a business who hides the name of the business or its product from potential customers. Or imagine a health clinic set up on an inner-city street with no sign out front and its shades pulled.

You can guess that the business will not stay in business long. Either people who may want its product will not learn of its existence, or its hiddenness will arouse suspicion. And a clinic that does not display itself will not attract many patients, which makes you wonder about its purpose.

When Jesus offers his followers the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), he calls them "the salt of the earth" (5:13) and "the light of the world" (5:14a). Then he uses the image of light to present a principle: What is manifest cannot be hidden. "A city built on a hill cannot be hid" (5:14b). "No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket" (5:15).

Why does he say what is obvious? Apparently because his followers were wanting to hide the new life, the light, they had received from God. Jesus reached out mainly to the poor and disenfranchised, people who were used to living under the boot heel of others. To be told they were "blessed," that they were "the light of the world," must have been difficult to imagine.

Do Mennonites have an inferiority complex? Are we afraid of letting people know who we really are? Do we try to hide our light?

What about us? Do Mennonites have an inferiority complex? Are we afraid of letting people know who we really are? Do we try to hide our light?

Humility has certainly been a trademark of Mennonites. But I wonder if we are too often proud of our humility. Or is our humility an excuse for not getting involved in other people's lives?

Living openly, being truthful about who we are and what we believe, is risky. Gandhi said that "truthfulness is at the heart of peacemaking." When we are open with our lives, we will as readily admit our faults as proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you turn Gandhi's statement around, you'll find that deceitfulness is often at the heart of violence.

I've heard counselors who work with abusers say that what is often most helpful to abusers in stopping their violent behavior is having more people know about their past behavior. This is also part of the core of 12-step programs. We admit our faults and rely on God's strength.

But being open means more than admitting our faults. It also means confessing Whom we follow, the One to Whom we offer our allegiance. Feeling unworthy can stifle our attempts to live faithfully the life Jesus has called us to live. We need to confess daily that we are salt and light, and we must let that light "shine before others" (Matthew 5:16).

This issue offers some examples of groups in the Fresno, Calif., area that are trying to let God's light shine. The leaders of these groups do not claim that this is an easy task, but it is worth pursuing. While their example is on display in Fresno, it is now available to us as well. Let it encourage us to shine where we live. Let us pray for our congregations, that each may be a city on a hill, a living demonstration of the difference that God's Holy Spirit makes in the lives of people who have committed themselves to follow Jesus.
Gordon Houser

Recyclable

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